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Editorial

I am not sure if it is with relief, joy or sadness (probably a mixture of all three) that I tell you that the Players Association is winding down. I hasten to add that no-one is about to get short-changed — present members will still receive the Broadsheet and the Bargain Basement stuff until their membership runs out. In the meantime, there will be no new memberships, so that in a year's time it will all be wrapped up in a suitable shroud and given an honourable burial.

'Ah me, lack-a-day', will be the cry, but you will be glad to know that the success of IMAGINE™ magazine is one of the prime reasons for the decline and fall of the old PA.

Much of what the Association started still remains with us: Turnbull Talking, Stirge Corner, Dispel Confusion and that hairy traveller from Moggedon, Rubic, all started life in the PAN newsletter. All have endured because they have proved just as popular with their new, larger audience as they did with the old. I hope this continues to be the case, and that you keep offering the highest accolade — 'More, more, more!' — because then, lo and behold, there will be more.

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..... Editor Keith Thomson Assistant Editor Paul Cockburn

..... Editorial Assistant Kim Daniel Features Assistant Michael Brunton

..... Art Phil Kaye News Doug Cowie

..... Advertising Lesley Hudson-Jessop

..... This month's contributing artists Keith Cooper, Ian Gibbs, Robin Grenville-Evans, Stephen Jones, Mark O'Dell, Paul Ruiz, Pete Young

..... Cover The Iron Hills, by Pete Young

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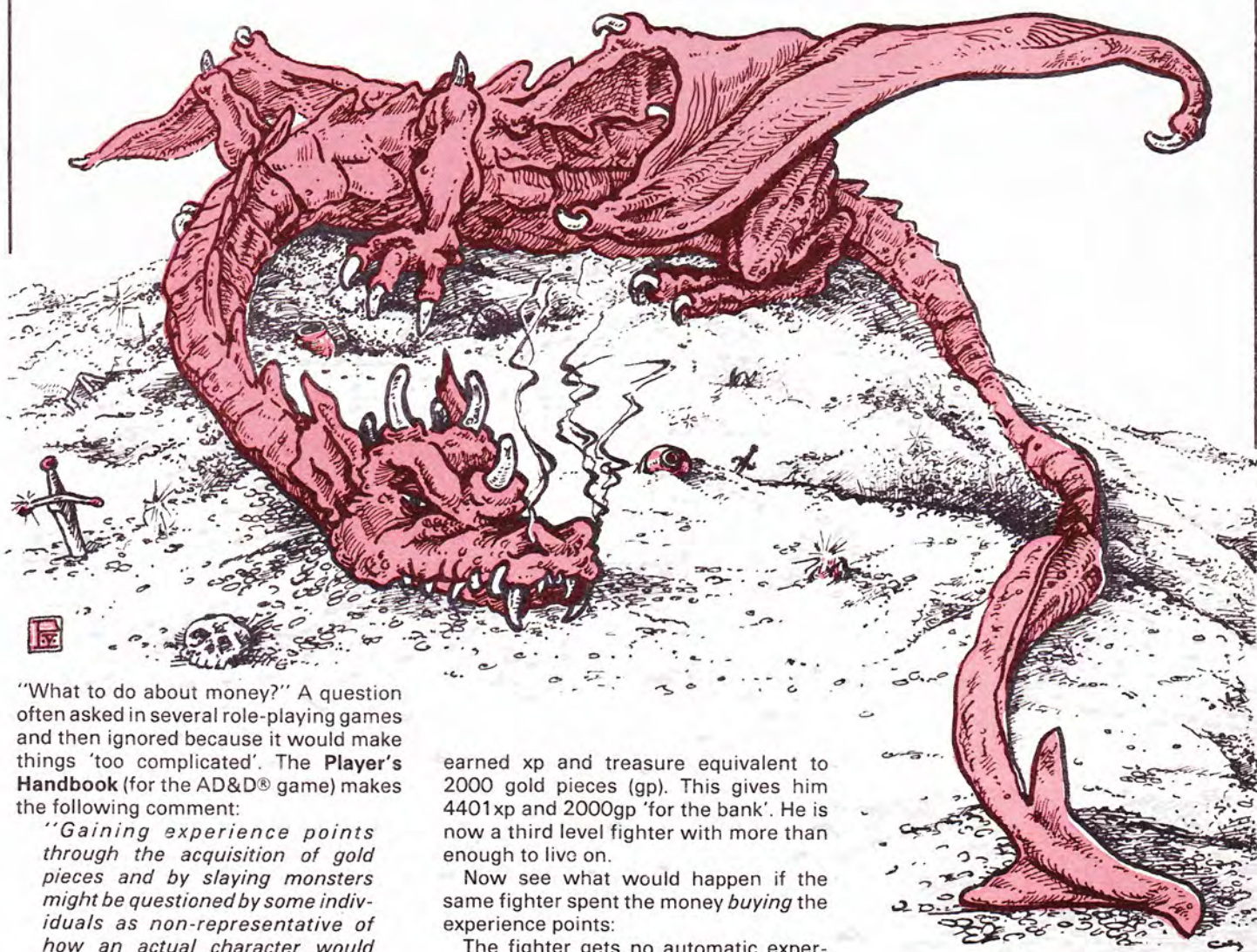
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WHAT TO DO WITH A DRAGON'S TREASURE

by Chris Barlow



"What to do about money?" A question often asked in several role-playing games and then ignored because it would make things 'too complicated'. The **Player's Handbook** (for the AD&D® game) makes the following comment:

"Gaining experience points through the acquisition of gold pieces and by slaying monsters might be questioned by some individuals as non-representative of how an actual character would become more able in his or her class."

....If one can accept the existence of 12' tall giants, why not the rewarding of experience points for treasure gained?"

....So too, fighters need physical training and weapons practice, magic users long hours of study in tomes of arcane lore, and thieves the repetition of their manual skills and discretionary prowess, but none of this is suitable to gaming. It is therefore discarded and subsumed as taking place during a character's 'off hours'."

The answer can be quite simple: you spend it buying experience points. Consider a simple example from the AD&D game:

A second level fighter with 2001 experience points (xp) has just returned from an adventure in which he has gained 400

earned xp and treasure equivalent to 2000 gold pieces (gp). This gives him 4401xp and 2000gp 'for the bank'. He is now a third level fighter with more than enough to live on.

Now see what would happen if the same fighter spent the money *buying* the experience points:

The fighter gets no automatic experience for his treasure, which leaves him with 2401xp and 2000gp — to spend as he will. Well, he decides he needs a new shield (the one he had finally gave way when the kobold he fought took a swipe at him), his sword could do with resharpening, and then there's food and lodgings.... but if he's prudent he reckons he still has enough to become a third level fighter. He pays for a body building course at the gymnasium, hires a better fencing instructor than the last one he had and some time later he's a third level fighter. Cost? 1600gp. He's now got 4001xp and what's left out of the rest of the money after paying for lodgings, new shield and so on.

The example illustrates the basic idea, offering an opportunity to put into practice what has always been assumed to occur, in a way which can readily be fitted into any rule system under which characters gain experience points by acquiring treasure.

Some of the consequences of adopting a system of bought experience are obvious. Fighters who spend large amounts of money on, say, alcohol will not advance as rapidly as those who practise rigorously. Characters who sell things (NPCs — such as alchemists — in particular) can advance in level, while 'natural skill' is enhanced. A first level fighter, for instance, is much more likely to spend his money training than on a **sword +1**, similarly a thief with a **wand of pits and trap detection**. Magical items are more likely to be sold in order to realise a permanent increase in a character's ability (keeping the item may be of only temporary value) while non-magical items will be treated with greater care — if the fighter knows that needlessly breaking a sword will cost him xp, because he has to buy a new one, he will look after it better and try to avoid ruining it needlessly.

There are other obvious consequences, but the system's greatest potential lies in its application to multi-classed characters, (genuine multi-classed characters, not the proverbial multi-classed half-elf). To see how, first consider an 'ordinary person' of any race. Let us call such a person an OLP, a zero level peasant.

The OLP

If called upon, every OLP, unless physically incapacitated, can fight ("pitch forks in the hand, the villagers face the Viking raiders"). In the AD&D game the results of such a fight would be determined by reference to the fighters table, under 0 level characters.

In addition, however, inherent in all OLPs are a whole range of other skills — thievish abilities, tracking, the ability to attempt an assassination, even the ability to try and turn undead (providing the OLP is sufficiently religious — a paladin is not a cleric, after all), in fact, the entire spectrum of skills that player characters — the 'specialists' in a particular discipline — demonstrate. The attempts might not be successful, but such abilities exist and can be established by extrapolating the percentage chances within a particular game system and taking into account any relevant factors — Advanced has two: a paladin can attempt to turn undead at a clerical level 2 less than his own and an assassin can perform thievish abilities also at a level 2 less than his own.

In a game system where this is the case, the tables need to be extrapolated twice, creating an intermediate — zero level — character class. Thus, a 3rd level paladin turns as a 1st level cleric, a 2nd level paladin as a 0-level cleric and a 1st level paladin has the same chance as an OLP of turning undead — which is obtained from the tables created, adjusting for the OLP's ability scores, eg dexterity.

What would a zero level character be? It would seem natural if the answer was 'an apprentice' — for example, the young mage who leaves the parental house and enters the wizard's tower, to spend long years learning the theory of magic before being able to apply it; the time a squire spends in the courtyards of his master's castle practising to become a knight. This is a period spent in learning the basic principles of a profession which would expand his abilities over and above those of an OLP — although these abilities will not yet be equal to a first level character.

Accepting that an OLP can attempt a whole range of tasks, establishes the obvious, namely that all characters are multi-classed: a 10th level magic user has a chance of picking someone's pocket — the chance an OLP has after applying any modifiers. If his dexterity is less than 9, he is unlikely to be very successful (compare an OLP with a dexterity of 9 to the minimum dexterity requirements to be a thief), and so it will stay unless he practises, either learning the hard way or seeking the guidance of an expert, undergoing tuition from a thief, for which he

will probably have to pay — the underlying principle of bought experience. We can now apply the system to create multi-classed characters.

A Multi-Classed Character

Consider our fighter with his 4001xp. He completes another adventure and this time gains 300 earned xp and 3500gp. Not enough to afford the training necessary to become 4th level, so he decides to spend his money developing other abilities. He thinks about his last adventure. Among those he travelled with was a thief, and although he never admitted it, if it hadn't been for her skills he would probably have met his end. So he hires a thief, who trains him in the art. 1000gp — the number of experience points necessary to go from 1st to 2nd level thief — will raise the thievish abilities of the fighter from OLP to 0-level thief. A further payment of 1000gp will turn him into a 1st level thief. Thereafter, the cost is the number of experience points necessary to progress as a thief.

This is just one of the things our fighter could have done with his money, however. Alternatively he could have continued his training as a fighter, or used 1500gp to become a 0-level cleric. Numerous other possibilities exist.

The following sections detail how to use bought experience to develop multi-classed characters.

Apprenticeships How to attain 0-level ability.

In any new profession, the first things which must be learnt are the rudimentary arts. These can be acquired in one of two ways. One way is to undergo an apprenticeship, which teaches the basics and at the end of which a character will be first level and at an age ready to go out into the world. This is the process which has been assumed to happen when a new character is created. The alternative is to pay someone for the tuition required.

This tuition takes the form of an intensive period of training, sometimes lasting several weeks and nearly always involving just teacher and pupil. This 'induction phase' raises the character from being an OLP to 0-level in the chosen field of study.

It should be noted that private tuition confers the basic benefits of an apprenticeship upon a person far quicker than normal. Working (cleaning, scrubbing etc) repays in kind the cost of the tuition, in addition to the rudimentary schooling. However, those who undertake it pay the penalty of 'lost' experience, since the money spent on the tuition could have been used to further their original profession, and in addition, the benefits of attaining zero level are often slight:

MAGIC: An induction in the rudimentary arts of magic develops the mental attributes necessary to cast 1st level

spells — although none are taught. It is during this period that the very simple spells known as cantrips are taught to the magic-user-to-be (see *IMAGINE™ magazine*, #8&9). Completion of the apprenticeship ends this process and also teaches the student a 1st level spell. Cost: 2500gp per stage. For Illusionists the process is similar.

FIGHTING SKILLS: A normal indoctrination in the art of fighting costs 2000gp and raises a character's fighting ability to that of a 'Man at Arms' (see the combined *Combat Results Table*, *IMAGINE magazine* #13) with either of two weapons — with all other weapons the character still fights as an OLP.

A character may also decide to pursue one of the fighter sub-classes, in which case as well as increasing the fighting skill of an individual to that of a Man at Arms, the character becomes a 0-level ranger, paladin or cavalier.

If an individual is already a 4th level fighter, and wishes to learn the skills of a ranger, for example, the character will probably have to ensure that the next fighting instructor he hires is a ranger. Then, in addition to becoming a 5th level fighter, he will also become a zero level ranger. Of course, rangers are more expensive as instructors — the cost will be the difference in xp between a 4th and 5th level ranger; in addition to which the character will neglect his body-building course somewhat, gaining only an 8-sided die for hit points — see below.

Similar considerations apply to the other fighter sub-classes. If a character wishes to become a paladin — perhaps to atone for some wrongdoing, then he must at that stage of his career be religious, and belong to a religion prepared to forgive any past transgressions.

CLERICAL ABILITIES: Both religious instruction and donations to a character's church (for the provision of rites, etc) will improve a character's religious standing. Instruction centres around the rigorous learning of the church's teachings and those who undertake this type of study form the laity of that particular church. Expected donation: 1500gp. Druidical instruction is similar, although its teachings are obviously concerned with nature. Druidic laity are usually akin to foresters. Cost: 2000gp.

Those who have undertaken such religious instruction — but who have not yet been ordained — turn as a 0-level cleric (provided their religious beliefs and practices are sufficiently sound).

THIEVISH ABILITIES: No specific indoctrination is necessary to become a thief. The intensive instruction teaches all those things you were not allowed to do as a child! Cost: 1000gp.

THE ART OF MURDER: An assassin's initial training is extremely involved, teaching as it does a knowledge of humanoid and other bodies (over and above what is known to an OLP), as well as a basic knowledge of poisons, disguise



and how to spy well. Intensive tuition will impart no thievish abilities. Cost: 1500gp. Only those who are evil will pursue such a line of study.

THE LIFE OF A MONK: Those who spend an induction period in a monastery are exposed to the full rigours of their way of life, preparing the individual — both mentally and physically — for what lies ahead. It increases a person's base movement rate to 70'.

Who can teach?

Any individual can teach, although the tutor must always be at least one level higher than the pupil. If the nature of the training requires particular material — the writings of a particular church — then it must be carried out where these are present. In addition, the person doing the teaching may have to be satisfied that the pupil is worthy — druids for instance will only teach true neutrals, rangers only those characters that they feel are good. Clerics are prepared to teach most people in the hope of converting them to their faith, although even they will reject those who are obviously unsuitable. Of course, if they teach any who are not devoted, those taught will acquire no divinely given powers.

To first level and beyond

Once a character has undergone the initial indoctrination he may continue as he wishes in that field. Progress to first level will be similar to the indoctrination phase, involving a second period of

intensive training and similar expenditure. Afterwards a character will be first level in the chosen field of study — if the teaching was that of a cleric or druid, then completion involves the ordination of the character.

Becoming first level in a particular character class bestows the benefits and abilities of that class on the character. Any other skills which the character has acquired during his life may still be used (subject to any limitations that exist).

MAGIC: After a character has undertaken his indoctrination in the magical arts he can pursue his studies further and if he successfully completes it, he will be a magic user with one spell — one of those on the books of the magic user by whom the character was trained. The chance a character has of successfully managing to learn any of the spells is dependent on his intelligence — the percentage chance to know each spell (thus characters with low intelligence will be unlikely to progress). If the character fails to learn any of the spells on the magic user's books, he has failed to become a first level magic user. He may try again with a different mage and may try to get his money back. The same process is repeated for subsequent levels.

After attaining first level the character can continue as desired — the cost being the difference in xp between his current level of ability in the skill which he wishes to advance and that which is acquired.

Limitations

Any limitations that already exist can remain unchanged by the adoption of

such an idea — a character must still be evil if he is going to learn how to assassinate someone, true neutral if he's going to spend time amongst a druidic circle. Those who become clerics must follow their religious teaching or face divine consequences. In addition, other limitations — such as when a character is wearing armour, magic will not function — need not change.

Considerations

HIT POINTS: A character gains 1d10 for each fighter level that he acquires, unless his instructor comes from a fighter subclass. In these cases the character acquires the hit die appropriate to that class — eg d8 if the instructor was a ranger. For all non-fighter levels the character attains, he gains a set number of hit points, equivalent to the hit points which would be gained once the maximum hit dice had been acquired — 1 for an increase in magic-user or illusionist level, 2 for an increase in clerical or druidic ability, etc. Treat assassins and monks as thieves and druids as clerics.

Constitution bonuses apply to each hit die gained as for fighters.

SAVING THROWS: Saving throws for characters developed under a system of bought experience will be the same as for 'normal' multi-classed characters — take the saving throws of the best class.

EARNED EXPERIENCE: For simplicity, earned experience advances a character's major profession — thus, the earned experience acquired by a 12th level fighter/1st level thief advances his level as a fighter. If a character has two or more dominant areas of ability, earned experience is split equally among them.

THE USE OF MAGIC ITEMS: The basic premise of bought experience is that everybody is multi-classed, consequently, prohibitions on magic items disappear — almost. In practice, bought experience results in something far closer to the current system than one might otherwise have imagined (allowing for current practice governing multi-classed half-elves).

Staffs/Rods, of a clerical nature: These can only be used by those ordained as priests (ie first level, not laity).

Scrolls: If you can cast the level of spell on the scroll, you can use the scroll (or take the scroll home and copy the spell down through the use of a **write** spell — this is learnt as a matter of course in a normal apprenticeship, but need not necessarily be learnt by a character who undergoes a period of induction).

Weapons: Any character may use any magic weapon provided his teachings (not his class) allow him to do so. Thus a magic user such as Gandalf in *Lord of the Rings*, may wield a magic sword, but a cleric who has to abide by a law which bars the use of edged weapons, cannot.

Clerics of other religions may be able to. However, the character will only be as proficient with the weapon as his training allows. Thus, if a magic user trains with a fighter and attains the level of man-at-arms using an axe and a longsword, and then finds a magic dagger, he will use the magic dagger as a 0-level character.

All other magic items (including wands) are useable by anyone.

So what does it all mean?

Adopting a system of bought experience in the manner thus presented has a number of consequences.

The immediate corollary is that since everybody acquires weapons skills as a fighter, everybody fights as a fighter. It is thus possible to play a 15th level, pacific, buddhist priest who, never having touched a weapon in his life, can't fight. Currently, he would be able to trade blows on a nearly equal footing with the samurai warrior at his shoulder. Military priests — like the orders who fought in the crusades — will have to spend more time in the courtyard and thus will not advance as fast as clerics.

The system allows for much greater involvement at lower levels due to its creation of multi-classed characters — while at higher levels, a predominantly clerical character, needing 160,000xp to go up a level, will be able to use some of the gp he gets out of a dungeon to advance one of his minor classes and hence have a much greater feeling of achievement and progress as a result of the adventure.

The greater diversity that comes of using bought experience means that players can better identify with individual characters, in addition to which, other people will be more inclined to treat characters as individuals — rather than someone saying "we could do with a cleric!", for example, that monk might just be able to cast a **fireball**. Thus an honest party is likely to take greater care choosing its spells prior to an adventure, and members of an evil party will be much more suspicious of each other. Without bought experience such situations tend to come about as a result of non-standard magic items.

The minimum ability scores should be kept for new characters, but discarded for established ones. After all, an MU teacher is unlikely to train an unsuitable apprentice with a high risk of failure, but if a rich, stupid, eighth level fighter is willing to *pay* for the privilege.... This system allows the rules concerning ability scores greater credence.

In conclusion, bought experience and its application to multi-classed characters allows campaigns far more diversity in a way which has a logical basis. However, the system is such that it can be fitted into an existing rule-system with very little needing to be changed — the xp value attributed to magic items is one of these, but it can be adapted for use by making the xp price the buying price; the selling price of course remains the same.

TABLES

All the following tables take the conventions of the 0-level character and the OLP, and make the necessary additions to various tables in the *Players Handbook* and the *DMG*.

MATRIX FOR TURNING UNDEAD
(DMG p75)

Type of undead	Level/Character Attempting to Turn	OLP	0
Skeleton		16	13
Zombie		19	16
Ghoul		20	19
Shadow		—	20
Wight		—	—

WISDOM TABLE II.: CLERICAL ADJUSTMENTS
(PH p11)

Ability Score	Spell Bonus	Chance of Spell Failure
3	Minus 1 2nd*	40%
4-5	Minus 1 1st**	35%
6-7	Minus 1 1st	30%
8	—	25%

*Unable to cast 4th level spells

**Unable to cast 5th level spells

TRACKING TABLES FOR RANGERS

Along Normal Passages or Rooms

Level of Ranger	OLP	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Chance to track (%)	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	99

Modifiers, if subject tracked:

through normal door or uses stair	-10%	through chimney or concealed door	-30%
through trap door	-20%	through secret door	-40%

Outdoors

Level of Ranger	OLP	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Chance to track (%)	10	20	30	40	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	92	94	95	96	97	98	99

Modifiers as *Players Handbook*

INTELLIGENCE TABLE II
(PH p10)

Ability Score	Chance to Know Each Listed Spell	Min. No. of Spells per Level	Max. No. of Spells per Level
3	1%	0	1
4-5	5%	1	2
6-7	15%	2	4
8	25%	3	5

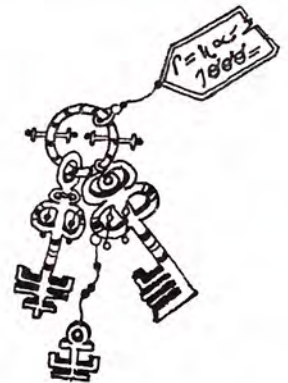
ASSASSINS' TABLE FOR ASSASSINATIONS
(DMG p75)

Level of the Assassin	Level of the Intended Victim	OLP, 0, 1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9
OLP		40%	30%	15%	2%	—
0		45%	35%	25%	10%	1%

DEXTERITY TABLE II.: ADJUSTMENTS FOR THIEVES
(PH p12)

Penalty or Bonus for:

Ability Score	Picking Pockets	Opening Locks	Locating/Removing Traps	Moving Silently	Hiding in Shadows
3	-45%	-40%	-25%	-50%	-40%
4	-40%	-35%	-25%	-45%	-35%
5	-35%	-30%	-20%	-40%	-30%
6	-30%	-25%	-20%	-35%	-25%
7	-25%	-20%	-15%	-30%	-20%
8	-20%	-15%	-15%	-25%	-15%



THIEF FUNCTION TABLE
(PH p28)

Base Chance to:

Level of the Thief	Pick Pockets	Open Locks	Find/Remove Traps	Move Silent	Hear Noise	Hide in Shadows	Read Languages	Climb Walls
OLP	20%	17%	10%	5%	1%	1%	—	83%
0	25%	21%	15%	10%	5%	5%	—	84%

OPTIONS:

Fighters: The new combat tables published in #13 of *IMAGINE* magazine are easily adapted for the OLP and 0-level character.

Rangers: If the table for outdoor tracking is stepped down from the 90% chance for 11th level in 5% stages, then an OLP will have a 30% chance of tracking. Some players may find this alternative more in keeping with their ideas, although it detracts from the specialist ability of the ranger.

Intelligence: This can also be adjusted, so that each step decreases the maximum number of spells by one, leaving an Intelligence 3 character with 2 first level spells instead of one, but the table as shown is the one I use.

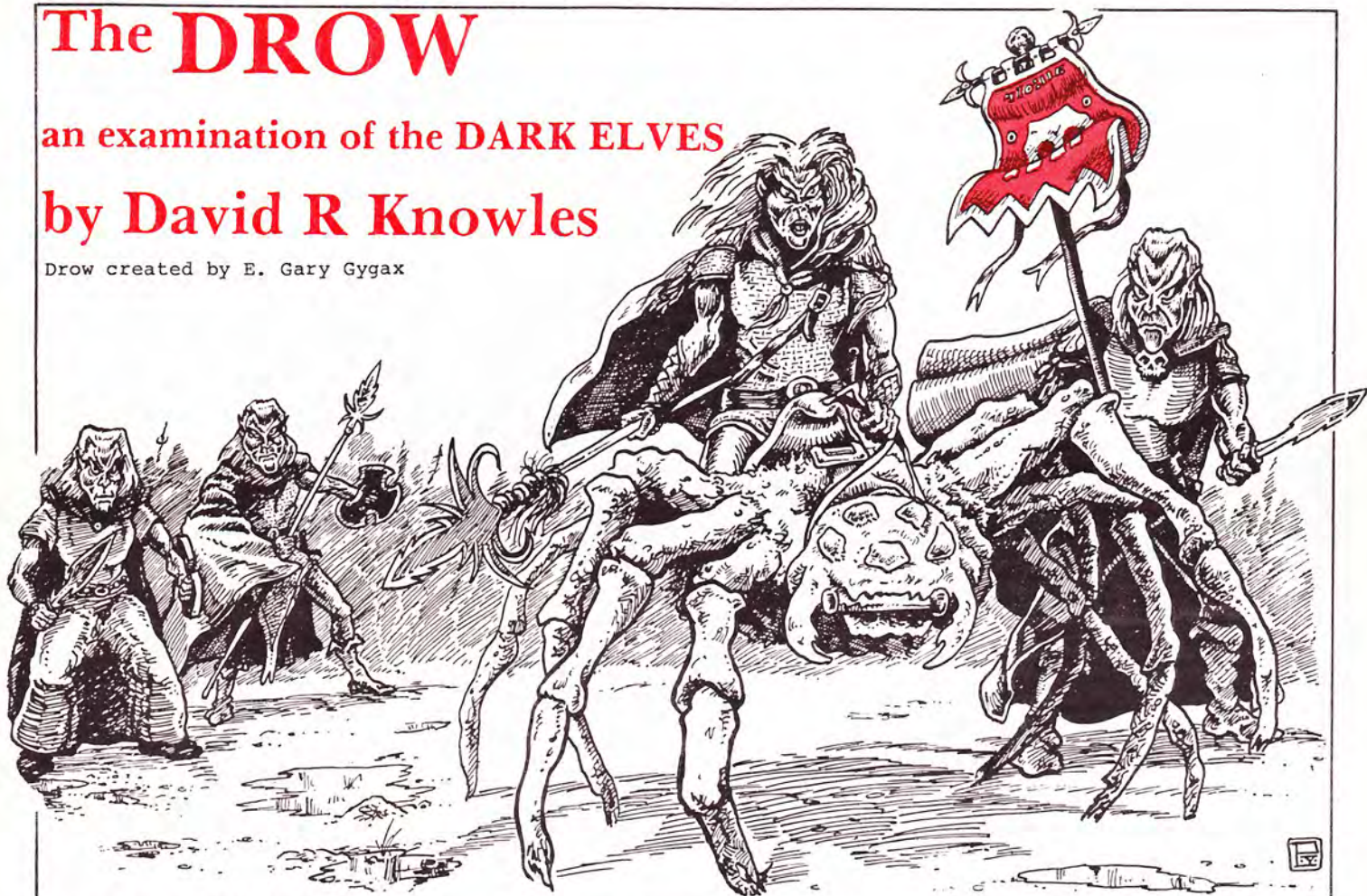
Thief Function Table: The two 1% chances to Hear Noise and Hide in Shadows for an OLP can be reduced to 0% in keeping with the mathematical progression of the rest of the table. 1% seems a little fairer.

The DROW

an examination of the DARK ELVES

by David R Knowles

Drow created by E. Gary Gygax



If you have ever taken part in any of TSR's *Descent into the Depths* series (D1-3), you will know of the Drow as the epitome of an evil intelligent race. They are the sort of foe who inspire further development of the available information. This article will begin that process.

For those of you who have never heard of the Drow, I will quote from the **FIEND FOLIO®** tome:

'Ages past, when the elven folk were but new to the face of earth, their number was torn by discord and those of better disposition drove from them those elves who were selfish and cruel. However, constant warfare between the two divisions of elven-kind continued, with the goodly ones ever victorious, until those of dark nature were forced to withdraw from the lands under the skies and seek safety in the realm of the underworld. Here, in lightless caverns and endless warrens of twisting passages and caves hung with icicles of stone, the dark elvenfolk - the Drow - found refuge and comfort. Over the centuries they grew strong once again and schooled themselves in arcane arts. And though they were strong enough to face and perhaps defeat their former brethren in battle, the Drow no longer desired to walk upon the green lands under the sun and stars. Yet they neither forgave nor forgot; and even now, above all else, they bear enmity for all of their

distant kin - elves and faeries - who drove them down beneath the earth and now dwell in the meadows and dells of the bright world.'

The Noble Drow and the Fighter Societies

As the Drow started to consort with various underground races and began to trade, the racial purity of the lower echelons of Drow society became impure with many half-Drow coming into being. Those Drow who had started off life as High Elves became in essence High (or Noble) Drow, forming new clans from the old families. These noble clans enlisted the aid of the middle mercantile clans and quickly took control of a segregated, almost caste-like society.

The most talented of the lower orders, along with some Noble and Merchant youths, were drafted into 'out of town' military orders, called 'Fighter Societies' by present-day Drow. The rest of the community was left to fend for itself in large, squalid, underground caves. These societies, one made up of all male members and the other of all female, developed into a highly skilled branch of the Drowic security forces. As the Drow developed, both societies' roles became more defined and powerful. The female society became the guardian of the Drowic clerical hierarchies, taking a carefully thought out, balancing role in religious affairs, and was equipped and supplied with its womanpower by the Noble clans.

The male Fighters' Society became the watchdog of the Merchant clans, preventing destructive feuding and making sure that no clan gained too much power. The society's other duties include anti-insurrection, anti-terrorism and general internal security. The Merchant clans supply men and finances in a way similar to the Nobles for the female society. It must be noted that this system sometimes leads to an imbalance of eligible males in the noble clans and of eligible females in the merchant clans and this in turn often leads to bastard offspring.

Both societies are made up of a number of individual groups, each Drow clan sponsoring a particular group. Members of a clan joining a society do not necessarily become part of the clan's sponsored group, creating an unusual situation for those in the groups because, despite the rivalry and political power-play between clans, those serving in a group can have allegiance to their own clan and an esprit de corps within their own group, which of course may well contain members of rival clans. The clan is wholly responsible for the upkeep of discipline in the group it sponsors and each group is nominally answerable for its actions to the clan.

Both societies regularly patrol built-up urban areas, the males taking the role of 'normal' police jobs and the females acting as 'dangerous situation' SWAT-like teams.

Both societies are organised in the same fashion; each has a Grand Master elected

by the respective patron clans. These stay in office until the voting body decides otherwise. Each Grand Master chooses his or her executive officers. As this sort of promotion increases social status considerably, it is sought after by many.

Drowic Society

The hierarchy of the community is as follows, from the bottom of the ladder to the top:

- (i) the pariahs of the society, slum dwellers and beggars (who, incidentally, have no organised guild);
- (ii) non-noble foreigners;
- (iii) the half-Drow;
- (iv) noble foreigners;
- (v) non-clan Drow;
- (vi) Bastard Clan Drow;
- (vii) Demons, Devils and similar types of powerful beings;
- (viii) Daemons;
- (ix) Merchant Clan Drow;
- (x) Lolth Clerics;
- (xi) finally, at the top, the Noble clan Drow males, then females, the females being the heads of the clans.

The Nobles maintain their strong position by taxation, influence within the societies, religious associations, political power play and outer/upper world slavery and trade. Any Drow, half-Drow or creature living within Drowic boundaries is subject to the taxation, levies and justice of the Noble class.

Each Noble clan has at least fifty totally loyal guards, who keep secure a large, well supplied, defensible estate, including a small fortress, which is situated within easy reach of the urban areas.

Merchant and Noble Clans

The Merchants are listed below with their allies and their associated noble class, and the Nobles are listed in order of power, with their allies and opponents. The Merchant clans are normally allied in pairs with one noble clan — this system theoretically giving an even balance of power — but because of the amount of intrigue and power play that occurs, the balance is usually tipped to some extent.

Merchant Clans

- a. **Prism** (Tormtor) allies of Chain and Coiled Whip
- b. **Morel** (Godeep) allies of Crescent
- c. **Coiled Whip** (Eilservs) allies of Prism
- d. **Crescent** (Aleval) allies of Morel and Mushroom
- e. **Puffball** (Kilsek) allies of Hook
- f. **Hook** (Kilsek) allies of Puffball and Gem
- g. **Shelf Fungi** (Despana) allies of Gem
- h. **Chain** (Tormtor) allies of Prism
- i. **Mushroom** (Noquar) allies of Crescent and Lozenge
- j. **Bars** (Eilservs) allies of Bone
- k. **Bone** (Eilservs) allies of Bars
- l. **Lozenge** (Everhate) allies of Mushroom and Horsetail Mushroom

- m. **Gem** (Despana) allies of Hook and Shelf Fungi
- n. **Horsetail Mushroom** (Noquar) allies of Lozenge
- o. **Urn** — no allies or associates
- p. **Star** — possible association with Eilservs
- q. **Echthar** — no allies or associates
- r. **Teflique** — possible association with Noquar

Noble Clans

- I. **Eilservs** (the most powerful clan) allied to Tormtor, foes of Kilsek
- II. **Kilsek**, enemy of Eilservs, allied to Despana and Noquar
- III. **Despana**, enemy of Eilservs, allied to Kilsek and Noquar.
- IV. **Noquar**, enemy of Eilservs, allied to Kilsek and Despana
- V. **Everhate**, nominal supporters of Kilsek, Despana and Noquar
- VI. **Godeep**, active supporters of Kilsek, Despana and Noquar
- VII. **Tormtor**, allied to Eilservs.
- VIII. **Aleval**, independent, non-committed.

There are no other clans than this. The clan system benefits Drowic society, because the continuous feuding and rivalry keeps a balanced spread of power. It must be noted that any serious threat to the security of the Drow will rapidly unify

All the most important Drowic religious ceremonies are completed with as much splendour, pomp and expenditure as possible. These ceremonies are often accompanied by sacrifices, great feasts and orgies. On these religious occasions the different social strata are kept well apart until the festivities, when the nobles can, and do, take whom and whatever they wish for the Holy duration.

Slavery

The Drow use servants and slaves to a large degree to do all their menial tasks. There are normally twice as many servants and slaves as Drow in an average household. This means that the Drow have to be very careful with their security procedures. All the slaves are branded with a Drow symbol on their foreheads, but neither servants nor slaves carry any identification of ownership. If any slaves are found to be out without a pass, clanbrooch, green cloak or letter permission from their owner, they will be thrown into a common prison to await transferral to a work unit, or to be collected by their owner.

The Drow breed some specialist slaves, training them from birth. The specialist training produces a very wide variety of slaves, including super-assassins, fungus chefs, specialists in subterranean agri-

.....

*The Drow neither forgive nor forget....
above all else they bear enmity for their
distant kin among the elves who drove them
beneath the earth....*

.....

the clans and their respective underlings under the **Dylis**, a call to the people. All the Drow will respect the Dylis, and there will be no back-stabbing while the call is on. The High Priestess of Lolth becomes the temporary head decision maker.

Religion

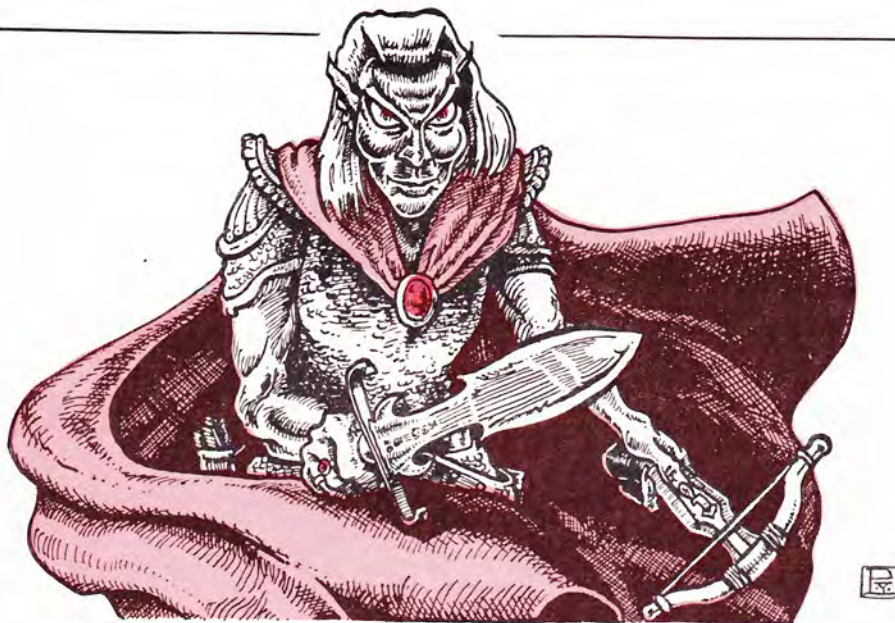
The Drow are not religious, though most do worship. Most normal folk and nobles follow the Demon Goddess Lolth, the others praise the Elder Elemental God. The difference is explained in module D3 **Vault of the Drow** as follows:

'The Eilservs have long seen a need for an absolute monarch to rule the vault and, as the noble house of first precedence, they have reasoned that their mistress should be Queen of all Drow. When this was proposed, the priestesses of Lolth supported the other noble families aligned against the Eilservs, fearing that such a change would abolish their position as the final authority over all disputes and actions of the Dark Elves. Thereafter, the Eilservs and their followers turned away from the demoness and proclaimed their deity to be an Elder Elemental God.'

culture, super musicians, odd exotics with special deformities, trained pleasure slaves, specialists in legends, geography, sports, knowledge of peoples, translators, etc. A favoured pastime of female High Noble Drow is to breed two captive Noble elves, and to keep the offspring hidden for years. When they finally allow these unfortunates out into the world, having taught them all kinds of barbarities, the results are invariably tragic.

Drow servants are usually bugbears, trolls, quaggoths, troglodytes and half-caste Drow, the slaves being derro, dwarves, duergar, elves, gnolls, goblins, half-elves, kobolds, half-orcs, orcs, hobgoblins and humans, with a few ex-servants who have broken law or been disobedient. Servants receive pay at the whim of their employer and normally have their accommodation provided. Slaves receive no pay and live a subsistence-level life. Slaves may of course very rarely be given a gift by the masters for some reason or other. The gifts, being the only possession owned by the slaves, are treasured beyond measure.

Occasionally a slave manages to find a hole in the security shield and breaks



free. These slaves are quickly hunted down if they are important, but otherwise are usually ignored, unless a few bored noble youths fancy some sport and unleash their tracking lizards. Bugbears are the servants of the Drow merchant clans and are used mainly as guards. Troglodytes are used to oversee menial labour, to guard all the gaming arenas, to aid in religious guard duties and are the servants of the noble clans (see D3, page 8, for more information). Trolls maintain discipline among the other servants. Quaggoths and half-castes act as household servants of the Drow and do much less military work.

Food and Drink

The Drow eat only fungus, yeasts, mosses and lichens grown in massive 'forests' near to their urban areas. This vegetation feeds from a phosphorescent 'sunlight' caused by chemical changes in the rock which forms the massive cavern ceilings of the special areas they choose to reside in. The ultimate food for the Drow is the flesh of myconids, ascomoids, basironds and phycomids, all of whom avoid the Drow. It is very rare indeed that one of these types will be caught, so their flesh is extremely valuable. Drow drink only spa-like waters, drowic wines and syrups, some of which are savoury, some sweet and some extremely potent. A Drow would be sick if she/he ever drank beer or mead and would find normal wines, beverages and water utterly undrinkable.

Drow have only one form of herd animal, these being large lizards. There are many different varieties of lizards, including war animals, draught beasts, trackers and normal riding lizards.

The Dark Elves

The 'normal' Drow populace, including merchants and nobles, cannot and have no wish to speak 'common', speaking only Drowic and the universal underworld lingua franca. The only Drow able to speak common are those specialising in languages and those who have regular contact with the outside world. Drow usually live for around eight hundred

years and have been known to live for up to one thousand years, though this is certainly not usual. They have the same height, weight and bone structure as High Elves, being of slight build, with delicate limbs, fingers and toes, sharply defined features and longish hair. Female hair is normally dark grey or shiny black, their skin being glossy black or various shades of grey. Male hair is always light grey or bright white and they have matt, jet black skin. All Drow have large, wide eyes, the irises of the females being mainly amber, with a few violet; those of the males are orange to yellow-orange. All Drow prefer violet, mauve, lilac, puce, maroon, blue, purple and similar colours. They never wear scarlet and use white or yellow as badge and decoration colours only. Occasionally grey, orange or brown is worn, though only by non-clan Drow, and green is reserved for foreigners, visitors, servants and slaves.

The Drow are a cruel, heartless folk, who are totally loyal to their own close kin and who will betray any non-Drow if it in any way aids them. The society is based on two things, the first being personal advancement tied with increasing the power of one's family or clan, and the second being a mutual protection against outside influences.

Introducing Drow Into a Campaign

The Drow are a strange, sometimes difficult people to bring into a campaign because of their natural dislike of the outdoors and their inherent language barriers. This particularly restricts their use as player characters. Whilst this section will not be presenting the Drow as a new character class in the normal fashion, it should provide sufficient information for the DM to introduce them as such if desired. Where the DM decides to do so, and to run a campaign where there are Drow Elf characters, he or she should be aware that the experience points needed to reach new levels should

be set extremely high to balance their racial abilities and long life-span.

Racial characteristics of the Drow (including level 0)

I. All Drow characters must be evil (non-evil Drow are exceptionally rare, and usually ostracised and powerless within their society). Drow are mainly chaotic, but can be of lawful or neutral alignment.

II. All have 120' infravision and dislike bright light intensely. In fact, magic light within 60' of a Drow reduces his or her dexterity by 2 and sunlight reduces their dexterity by 1 (this reduction is not permanent). All Drow have a 10% loss of quality of vision (compared with humans') in sunlight, ie definition of vision and sighting distance etc.

III. Drow females (of level 1 or above) have a move base of 15" and level 0 females, along with all Drow males, a move base of 12".

IV. All Drow have an innate Magic Resistance of 50%, gaining an extra 2% at each new level after the first. They are all +2 to save versus all forms of magic, compared to humans of the relevant class.

V. All Drow of level 1 or more must have a Dexterity and Intelligence of 9+. Their racial modifications add one point to Dexterity and remove one point from Constitution. Drow rarely have high constitutions even though many are of the Fighter class.

VI. Drow females may add 1 to their Charisma, reducing their strength by 1. Drow males have a non-compulsory 33% chance of adding 1 to their strength and if so, must reduce their Charisma by 2. No Drow female may have a strength greater than 18 (75) and no male more than 18 (88).

VII. Drow up to and including seventh level have a hit dice of d8+1 per level; from eighth to eleventh level inclusive they add a d8 per level and from twelfth level onwards they gain two points per new level. There is no difference in die used for different character classes or sex. 0-level Drow have 1d4 hit points (note that d8+1 has the same average as d10 but with a narrower spread).

VIII. At level 1, Drow gain an innate spell-using ability, giving them once a day each one of the spells listed in Table 1 (dependent on sex and level). This ability is in addition to any spells usable by a Drow's particular character class.

IX. All Drow can speak Drow, their Alignment language, the Underworld common language and any Drow with an Intelligence of 10+ can also speak Elf and Gnome, gaining one additional language for each Intelligence point above 11. Any Drow above level 0 can also use a 'silent language'. By combining bodily and facial expressions, posture and movement, they

can communicate with any other Drow (above level 0) within 30'. This language is able to convey much information and when combined with hand movements is as effective a way of communication as any speech. Drow will never teach this to any others, except Drow above level 0 who have not yet learned the language.

X. Drow have a limited range of character classes. All male Drow (of level 1 and more) must be Fighters, Fighter/Magic-Users or Fighter-Clerics. All female Drow (of level 1 or more) must be Fighters, Fighter-Clerics or Clerics. There are a few exceptions to this, namely:

- a) a 2% chance of any non-noble city-dwelling Drow being a Thief, as well as his or her original class(es);
- b) a 3% chance of any bastard noble-class Drow being an Assassin as well as his or her original class(es).

XI. Drow characters can make their own neo-adamantine weapons and armour, being able to make such articles as swords, daggers, maces, crossbows, javelins, suits of mail and bucklers. At each new level (including first) a Drow learns to fashion one new item; from levels 1-4 he/she can produce items of +1 bonus; at levels 5 and 6 items of +2 bonus; from levels 7-9 +3; and at level 10 or above +4.

All Drow at the age of thirty gain a special cloak and a pair of boots. The latter (when used at least 20' away from one or more non-Drow) give a 75% chance of *Moving Silently*, and add +1 to all their saving throws with respect to themselves.

The cloak (which gives +6 to save versus fire) gives a 75% chance of *Hiding in Shadows*. At third level a Drow may choose to be shown how to refashion the cloak to give it an AC bonus of +1 (instead of learning to make a new neo-adamantine item). There is a 75% chance of success when refashioning the cloak. If 00% is rolled, the cloak is permanently damaged and loses its special properties.

All Drowic equipment (the cloak, boots, items etc) can only be fashioned underground in Drowic forges etc. When any drow item or piece of clothing is exposed to sunlight, it begins to decay, taking 2-12 days to lose all its special properties. When taken above ground, if protected from sunlight, the items will retain these abilities for 30+1d20 days and if exposed to the radiations of the Drow homelands for 1 week in every 4, the items will retain their properties indefinitely. These facts, well known to the Drow themselves, have done more than anything else to limit lengthy campaigns, or wars beyond their own domains.

XII. All Drow on reaching third level gain the ability to brew their own **sleep** potions, taking 6 days to complete each dose of the potion and costing 100gp per potion brewed. Each completed potion has a potency value derived from adding 1d10 to the level of the Drow who

manufactured it. Therefore, a third-level Drow is able to brew potions, the potency value of which ranges from 4 to 13. For each point of potency value a potion has, it is able to **sleep** one hit point of its imbiber. Thus, if an orc with 6 hit points drinks a dose of the potion with a value of 8, he will immediately fall asleep. If a dose of potion is drunk by someone who has more hit points than the potion, the effect will be to deduct the potion's value from the imbiber's hit points, not as actual physical damage, but in the ability to take damage, thus weakening the victim. Thus, a fighter who has 21hp drinks a potion with a value of 10. When the fighter's hit points are reduced by 11 or more — making his hit points 10 or less — the **sleep** potion will come into effect. The potion only affects humans and humanoids and for just 1d6 hours, during which time only a **wish** spell may counteract the effect. The potion is clear, odourless and tasteless, and flows readily. It will keep for up to a year if stored in special sealed vials, lasting 10-60 days when exposed and decaying instantly in sunlight.

XIII. All Drow must make a die roll on Table 2 to find their social status within the Drow world. Included in the Social Status table is a figure for the money a Drow character begins with. The amount

of strength, though this bonus affects only encumbrance bonuses, the opening doors and bend bars/lift gates scores, and does not increase to hit and damage bonuses.

When the drug is taken, the user must throw a d100: if the result is 01%, he/she has permanently induced one form of mental disorder; if the result is 02-05%, he/she has — for the duration of the drug — a form of mental disorder. To find out which type of disorder, throw 1d20 and consult the **Types of Insanity** table from **DMG** p83. Any addict who cannot take the next dose of drug when it is needed will suffer a 1d2 reduction of Strength, Dexterity, Constitution and Charisma per day until the next dose is taken. These reductions are not permanent, the lost points being recovered when the necessary dose is taken. If any one of these abilities drops to zero or below as a result of these reductions, the character will go immediately into a state of semi-coma, only coming out of this when the vital drug is administered by someone else. Additionally, a slight addict has a 2% chance per dose of becoming a great addict, and a great addict has a 1% chance per dose of dying from the drug's effects. An overdose of the drug given to non-users may kill them or send them permanently insane. To avoid this, they

.....
Any Drow who fails the Test of Lolth is kept by her as a servant — turned into a Drow Spider — totally despised by the true Drow who passed....
.....

of money is dependent on status, not character class, and overrides the money noted in the **Players Handbook**. All Drow must also roll to see if they are addicted to the various narcotics freely available in the community. A roll of 1-4% makes a Drow an addict (a relatively common thing in the Drow world). If a character is an addict, the player must roll a d10 to see how strong the addiction is:

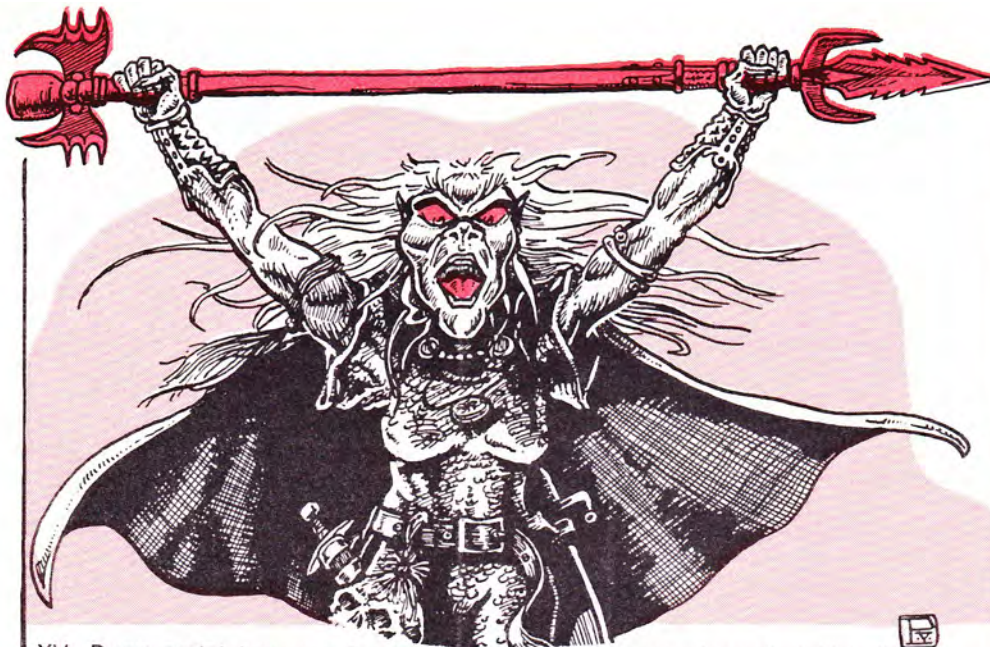
- 1 — greatly addicted,
- 2-4 — moderately addicted,
- 5-10 — slightly addicted.

Greatly addicted characters need to take a dose of their drug once every 1d4 days, rolling from each dose to the next, as do moderate addicts needing a dose every 1d8 days and slight addicts once every 1d20 days. The effects of a dose will last for 3d6 hours; see **DMG** p82 for the drug's effects.

Although drugs reduce many facets of a character's abilities, they greatly enhance awareness of the events happening in the immediate vicinity, giving +1 for initiative rolls and a 5% better chance of detecting or noticing hidden and secret things. For the duration of the drug's effect, the imbiber will also receive one extra point

must Save vs Poison, firstly against death and then against insanity. Note that it is unlikely that an addict will give away or waste any of his/her precious supply of drugs. Within the boundaries of the Drowic homelands, drugs are in common supply, being easy and cheap to obtain. Elsewhere, each dose will cost at least 4d100 gp, where supplies are available.

XIV. When a Drow reaches 6th level, he or she is given a test by Lolth (Spider Goddess of the Drow). The test will take place on a different plane to the Drowic home plane. Drow who do well, are deemed worthy to be re-admitted into the Drow community. Success in this test increases the social status of the tested persons, though it does not allow them to join a higher social level than previously. Once having taken the test, the Drow then continue with their own lives. Any Drow who fails the test is kept by Lolth as a servant on her plane. Lolth makes these losers into Driders (Drow Spiders) who are totally despised by true Drow (for details of Driders see **TSR's Monster Manual 2**). DMs should work out for themselves what form the test takes, but it should not allow for more than a 70% chance of success.



XV. Drow racial bonuses for thieving abilities are as follows:

Pick Pockets & Climb Walls -5%;
Move Silently, Hide in Shadows and Hear Noise +10%.

XVI. All female Drow Lolth Clerics can converse with any form of Giant Spider.

XVII. Only 5% of Drow can swim or ride a horse (except for Nobles, who are taught to ride Nightmares when they are about 25 years old). All Nobles and Merchants can ride Lizards. Drow in general don't use bows, axes or two-handed weapons.

XVIII. All Drow Fighters and Thieves are +1 with short-swords and crossbows.

XIX. When actively seeking such, any Drow can — within 10 ft — detect a slope or gradient in a passage upwards or downwards with a 75% chance of success; a new construction with 75% chance of success; sliding or shifting walls or rooms with a 66.66% chance of success; traps involving pits, falling blocks and other stonework with a 50% chance of success, and approximate depth underground with a 50% chance.

XX. Drow in general always stay deep underground and will only leave their cities when there is good reason. The following might constitute viable reasons for a Drow to have to do so:

- i) family bankrupt and run out of the city;
- ii) family very poor — the character leaves to find money;
- iii) the character has a physical defect or odd skin pigment and is banished from the community (this is very rare);
- iv) the character is a criminal and is branded and thrown out of the city;
- v) the character is a non-evil Drow and leaves for better pastures (this occurrence is even rarer than iii);
- vi) the character is sent to find an item (magic or otherwise);
- vii) the character is part of a slave-gathering expedition, or is sent to kidnap someone;
- viii) the character has a specific task,

eg, an ambassadorial job, liaison to a foreign power or trade negotiation;

- ix) the character has an assassination, spying task or theft to complete;
- x) the character must find a particular person;
- xi) a **geas** or **quest** is placed on the character;
- xii) the character is to accompany or guard someone, for example a family guest, local Daemon or foreign diplomat;
- xiii) the character is to win the hand of someone in marriage by order of his/her family or Lolth.

XXI. The Drow in this article are not exactly the same as those from the **FIEND FOLIO®** tome, having been modified to facilitate reasonable character class development.

XXII. Drow commence adventuring at 60+6d10 years old.

XXIII. To determine their advancement:

- a. Drow Fighters use the Magic-User's experience table
- b. Drow Magic-Users use the Paladin's experience table
- c. Drow Clerics use the Ranger's experience table
- d. Drow Assassins use the Fighter's experience table
- e. Drow Thieves use the Assassin's experience table.

Drow do not gain the experience bonus due to each class (as defined in the **Players Handbook**). Instead, they will gain a 5% bonus if the following qualifications are met:

- a. Male Fighter — Strength of 16+ and Dexterity of 15+
- b. Male Magic User — Intelligence of 17+ and Dexterity of 15+.
- c. Male Cleric — Wisdom of 17+ and Dexterity of 15+
- d. Male Assassin — no bonus.
- e. Female Fighter — Strength of 16+ and Dexterity of 16+
- f. Female Cleric — Wisdom of 17+ and Dexterity of 16+
- g. Female Assassin — no bonus
- h. Female Thief — no bonus.

TABLE 1
Drow Spells

Level	All Drow	Extra for females
1	Dancing lights	
2	Faerie fire	
3	Darkness	Clairvoyance
4	Detect magic	Suggestion
5	Know alignment & levitate	Dispel magic
6		Detect lie

TABLE 2
Social Status

Die roll	Social background	Initial starting money
01-07	Noble	5d6+1 x 10gp
08-15	Bastard noble	2d6+3 x 10gp
16-26	Merchant	3d4+3 x 10gp
27-40	Bastard merchant	2d4+1 x 10gp
41-80	Normal city-dweller	2d4 x 10gp
81-00	Slum city-dweller	2d3 x 10gp

This initial starting money is then modified as follows:

Roll a percentage die. If 1-5% is rolled, multiply the starting money by 10. If 96-00% is rolled, divide the initial money by 10. This means that starting money can be as high as 3100gp and as low as 2gp.

Noble non-bastard female Drow have a 1% chance of receiving one of the following, as well as their starting money. Roll 1d6:

- 1) a **ring of protection +1**;
- 2) a **wand of enemy detection**;
- 3) a **ring of protection +2**;
- 4) a **mace +1** or **dagger +1**;
- 5) a scroll of 1 first-level spell appropriate to character class;
- 6) a **potion of healing**.

Drow who are 'normal city-dwellers' should roll 1d20 on Table 3 to discover secondary skills. Other social statuses do not have such a skill.

TABLE 3
Secondary Skills
Roll 1D20

- 1 Guard
- 2 Fungus farmer
- 3 Drugs seller
- 4 Gambler
- 5 Teamster/Lizard husbander
- 6 Crystal worker
- 7 Wine maker
- 8 Weapons/armour maker
- 9 Tailor
- 10 Jeweller
- 11 Housebuilder
- 12 Trader
- 13 Shoemaker
- 14 Court/official attendant
- 15 Spider attendant
- 16 Slave seller
- 17 Metal worker
- 18 Chef
- 19 Roll twice more, ignore 19 & 20
- 20 No secondary skill.

David R Knowles

IMAGINE magazine, August 1984

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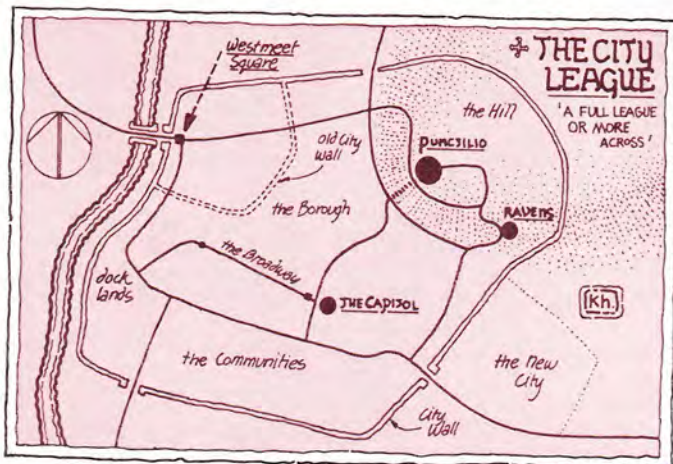
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PELINORE

THE CITY LEAGUE

This month, we would like to begin introducing you to the vast hive of humanity — and more than humanity — who live in the City League, home base for the **IMAGINE** magazine campaign world. While not every DM will wish to use The City as the base for his campaign, we hope that this feature will still be useful to everyone; since if you aren't interested in 'The League', then you can always just introduce the characters and buildings you will find on these pages and in succeeding months into your own campaign.

With your help and bit-by-bit we will build up a picture of this teeming city and the characters within. But to start with, we had better introduce some of the concepts and ideas that will hold it all together.



MAJOR NPCs

Whenever NPCs are introduced, they will be described in a standard format. While all the stats will be for the **D&D**® and **AD&D**® games, the general information about each character will allow referees of other systems to quickly extrapolate whatever they need. The characters will be presented as follows:

Wherever alternative stats for a particular category are shown with a slash (eg, hp 8/11), the **D&D** stats are shown before **AD&D** stats.

Line 1: Identifying Number; Name; Class & Level; Alignment; hp;
Line 2: Weapon

Line 3: Race (immediately below number)

Lines 4-10: Ability Stats in the form 'S 18', etc

Lines 4-10: Indented from the stats — details of character

- ☐ appearance
- ☐ occupation
- ☐ characterizations
- ☐ contacts

Additional information about characters will also be found in the general description of their 'haunt'.

MINOR NPCs

Less important NPCs will be described merely with their name and a few descriptive sentences. All are NM/FO hp4 unless otherwise defined. It is of course, possible that an otherwise unimportant NPC gains undue attention in a game, in which case the DM should add whatever stats are required.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations will be used in the NPC stats, in addition to the normal:

For the **AD&D** game: Assassin; Acrobat; Barbarian; Bard; Cleric; Cavalier; Druid; Fighter; Freeman; Illusionist; Monk; Magic User; Paladin; Ranger; Thief.

For the **D&D** game (where different): Avenger; Dwarf; Elf; ½ling; Knight; Normal Man.

Races (where not covered by the above): ½Elf; Gnome; Human; ½Orc.

SPELLBOOKS

Spellbooks show level, followed in brackets by the spell as numbered in the rule book, with an asterisk if it is currently memorised; eg 1(2,3*) means that the MU has the first level spells numbered 2 and 3, in her spell book and that number 3 is currently memorised. Full spell memory will not normally be allocated, to allow the DM flexibility.

The FREEMAN or FREEWOMAN

A new NPC character class for use in towns and cities

Cities are not just populated by a mixture of exotic adventurers and thousands of zero level fighters (NM/FO). There will be many representatives of the adventurous classes, and there will also be the social also-rans, the low-lives, but a great many of the people will be Freeman and Freewomen, representing merchants, business people, functionaries, clerks, bankers and many other mundane trades. In order to allow these people a little more depth in this campaign, we suggest that DMs make use of the Freeman character class hereafter detailed. Note that this is not intended to be a class available to player-characters, and after a quick look, very few of your players will be that keen anyway!

Character abilities

The abilities are as normal and are rolled as normal. There is no reason why these people should be any less or any more able than the average adventurer. In certain circumstances, the DM should reduce some ability scores to allow for the less-than-strenuous training that non-adventurers may have had.

Bonuses due to character abilities

- Strength: No attack/damage bonus, others normal
- Intelligence: Normal language bonuses
- Wisdom: Normal Saving Throw bonuses
- Dexterity: No missile bonuses, others normal
- Constitution: Ordinary (non-fighter) hit point bonuses
- Charisma: Normal

Character class details

- Hit die type: d6
- Max no hit dice: 9 (+1 hp for each level above 9)
- Spell ability: nil
- Level limit: none
- Armour: any, but rarely worn
- Shield: possible
- Weapons: any, but only ever proficient in one (-5 non-proficiency penalty)
- Combat table: use magic-users combat results table
- Oil? yes
- Poison? yes
- Racial restrictions: none

The level of a Freeman or Freewoman is not determined by experience points but by a combination of their wealth, age and influence. At 10th level Freeman and Freewomen become members of the nobility. Thus a simple bureaucratic flunkey would be Fr1, a wealthy trader Fr5, a courtier Fr8 and so on. They may use any magical item that can be used by a fighter or a thief. Freeman and Freewomen save as fighters of the same level.

New Weapons for use by Freeman and Freewomen Or, who needs to carry a lump of steel around all day?

Weapon	Weight	Damage	Length	Speed	Adjustments
Sword stick	20	1-6/1-8	3'	3	as dagger
Staff-mace	60	2-7/2-8	6'	8	as mace (foot)
Knobbed stick	30	1-6/1-3	3'	4	as club

Note: in the **D&D** game the staff-mace does 1-6 damage

A sword stick is a walking stick that holds a thin, rapier-like weapon. A staff-mace is like a quarter-staff with a heavy, ornate head that is both decorative for public appearances and dangerous. A knobbed stick is like a short staff-mace — a walking stick whose handle is strengthened and weighted to act like a club when required.

PELINORE

WESTMEET SQUARE

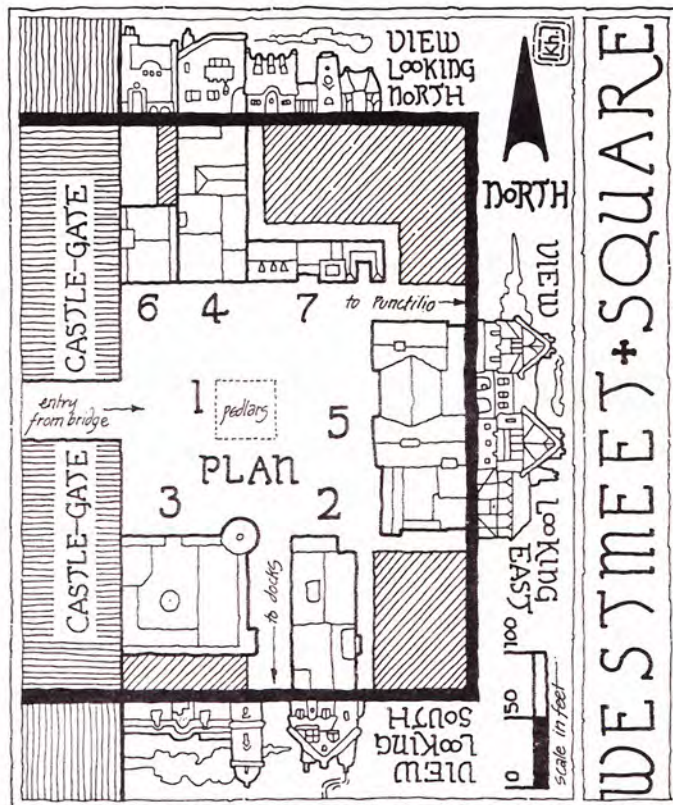
1a Androgenes Metz; T7/T7; N/CN; hp 22/28; AC 5/5; Dagger and Sling

- H/½O
S 12 ☐ Filthy, smelly leathers, unnecessary eye-patch
I 12 ☐ Sells matches/hankies/gewgaws at street corners seeking victims
W 7 ☐ Dishonest(!), shifty, answers to nickname 'Phew'
D 17 ☐ Knows members of the local thieves' guild and probably an assassin or two
C 8
Ch 6

1b Nila 'Flossy' Jostle; T2/A2; C/CE; hp 5/8; AC 4/4; Poisoned hatpin (1 point of damage plus poison)

- H/½E
S 7 ☐ Cheap silks over leather shirt
I 6 ☐ Floozy, waits for custom in Square
W 8 ☐ Flirtatious, dangerous, greedy, keen on blackmail
D 18 ☐ Knows Phew (1a), and six or seven minor officials
C 13
Ch 15

1c The Pedlars are one of the many itinerant groups of traders who travel from square to square setting up their stalls. This particular group is typically nomadic, and although they will blow hot and cold during the cut-throat bargaining they love, they are all true neutrals. Interestingly, these four humans are albino brothers. From their stalls, adventurers may buy all normal, everyday items (like food, clothing and oil). The shops around the square must be approached for their specifics, however, since there is an unwritten City League law that forbids street sellers peddling the same wares as a shop within sight of it. Rumour has it that most pedlars are controlled by the Uncle — a mysterious figure whom everyone has heard of, but no-one admits having met. Such control would be worth a fortune to any who had it, and it is probable that it is the cause of periodic fierce, secret wars.



2 The APOTHECARY

Mylitis Ep-Stine is an old gnome who has run this apothecary for longer than most locals remember. In it can be bought the usual chemicals (including incense), as well as most of the components magic users need to cast their spells; unfortunately Mylitis does tend to overcharge for things, but then, he 'has to make a living, doesn't he?' Depending on the kind of campaign being run he may also prepare and sell potions. As he supplies the local MU school (9) with many of their needs they oblige him by making sure his bodyguard, Grimmix, is kept **charmed** to his service. Mylitis is assisted by two unexceptional apprentices.

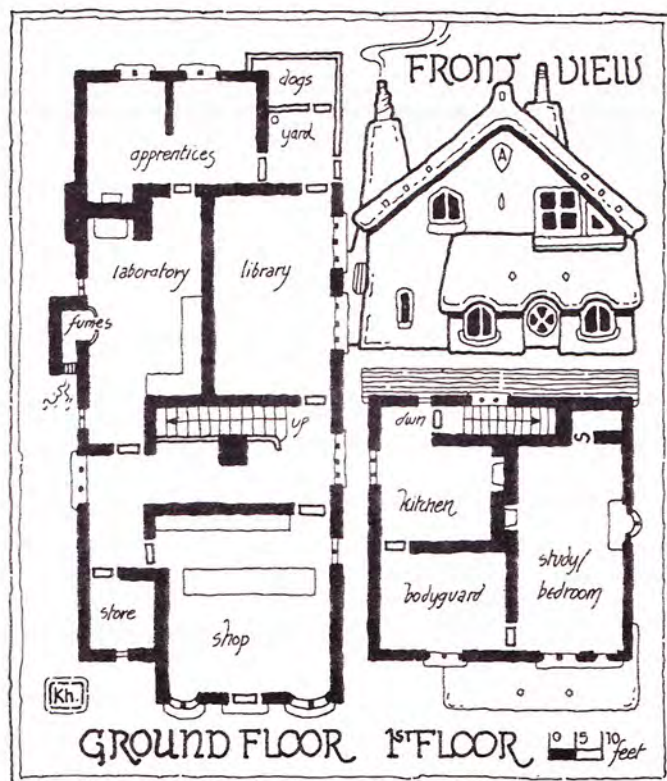
2a Mylitis Ep-Stine; Fr3/Fr3; N/N; hp 8/11; AC 9/10; No weapon (bodyguard)

- G/G
S 6 ☐ Grey and brown robes, black and silver skull cap
I 16 ☐ Apothecary
W 12 ☐ Avaricious, cunning, suave, old gnome
D 4 ☐ Knows local traders and very friendly with inhabitants of the local MU school
C 9
Ch 12

2b Grimmix; F6/F6; C/CE; hp 40/50; AC 5/5; Club

- ½Ogre/½Ogre
S 17 ☐ Animal skins
I 3 ☐ Bodyguard **charmed** into service of Mylitis Ep-Stine (2a)
W 5 ☐ Stupid, brave, sly
D 10 ☐ Don't know nuffink nor nobody and nobody loves him....
C 12
Ch 4

2c & 2d Lance and Beaubritches are 2 apprentices to Mylitis — male human youths who know the local serving classes



3 The TRAVELLERS' SHRINE

The City League is nothing if not an opportunity to make some cash and so the clerics of the town have agreed to establish this multi-denominational shrine just inside the gates. Visitors may enter the shrine, pray in one of the private booths and receive holy water or a **cure light wounds** spell from the resident cleric, assuming he or she is 'in'. Three fighters act as attendants, collect the money and show visitors to vacant booths (and clear up afterwards) or to the screen from where beneficence is dispensed. If any visitor behaves badly or aggressively one of the attendants simply rings the bell, and as the garrison is right next door....

Suggested costs are: Entry and private praying booth 5gp/turn

Cure Light Wounds 125 gp per spell

Holy Water 30 gp per vial

No other clerical items are available.

3a Amandaia Lamancha; C5/C5; N/N; hp 20/28; AC 7/7; Made in room

H/H

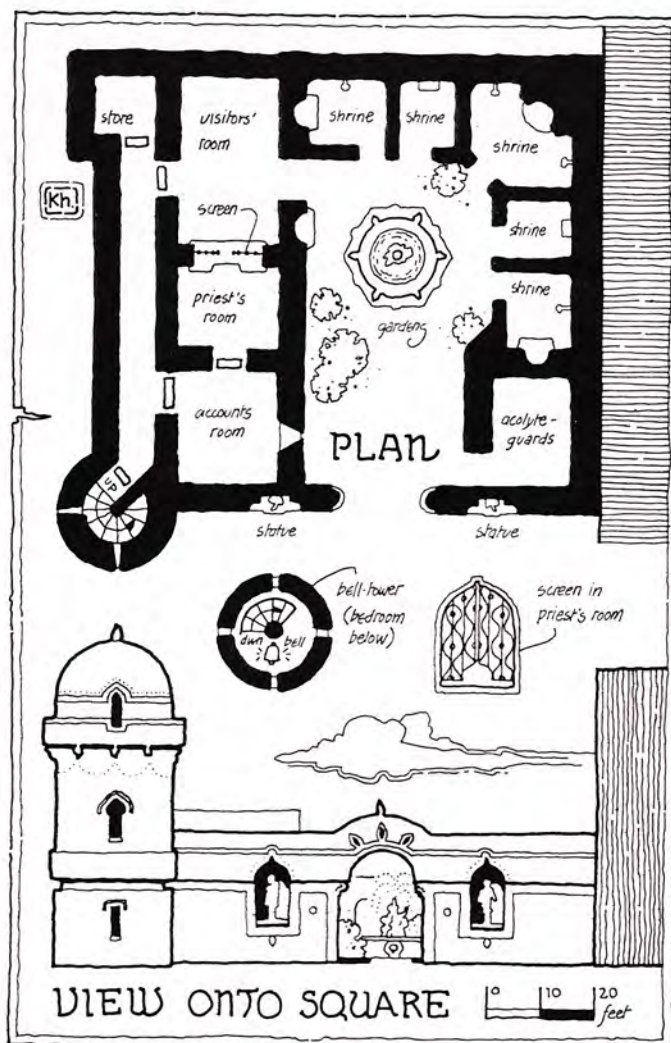
- S 14 ☐ Rich maroon linen robes, boots, **ring of protection** +3
- I 9 ☐ Representative cleric at traveller's shrine
- W 14 ☐ Kindly but uncommunicative, distant
- D 8 ☐ Knows the whereabouts of most temples in Docklands and Borough, does not know any bureaucrats or merchants
- C 14
- Ch 12

3b Link Pinthrip; Fr3/Fr3; N/NE; hp 10/12; AC 8/8; Short Sword

H/H

- S 14 ☐ Leather uniform and seal of office on a thumb ring
- I 13 ☐ Official money collector for clerical group
- W 9 ☐ Officious, snide, overcharges
- D 8 ☐ Is familiar with local byelaws, knows several other petty functionaries
- C 13
- Ch 9

3c, 3d & 3e Portia, Bold Mary and Invidia are the three acolyte-guards. Each is F2/F2 with hp 10/14. They say they know no-one locally, keeping their own company and occasionally visiting their families living somewhere in Docklands. They wear severe short, black, tunics with small, jet adornments and thonged sandals. Invidia is the Scards' daughter (see **Black Pig, 4**) but she ignores them. Bold Mary is the daughter of the nearby miller (10)



4 The BLACK PIG PUBLIC HOUSE

An old scruffy local. The place has a well deserved reputation for good beer and good food served at sensible prices (unlike, some say, the **Ford Inn, 5**) and is therefore usually packed. Run efficiently by the landlord, despite his, now famous, imaginary tales of valour. There is very limited sleeping space on the floor after everyone has gone home. At the rear is a general purpose building that can be used at the DM's discretion. Recommended prices: everything just below the norm.

4a Hurnakar Scard; Fr2/Fr2; N/LN; hp 6/9; AC 3/3; No weapon

H/H

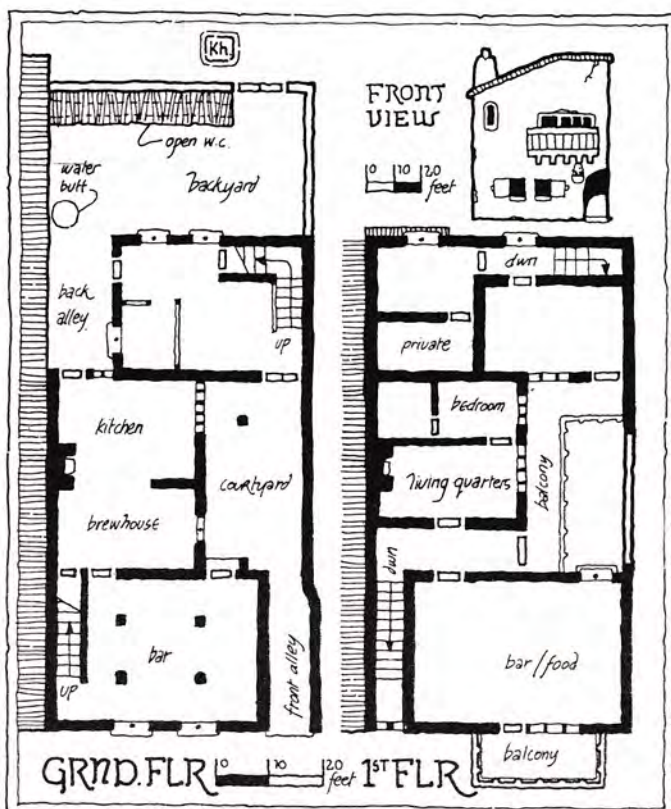
- S 16 ☐ Gleaming breastplate over olive green tunic, brown trousers tied at the knee
- I 10 ☐ Brewer, publican and professional coward
- W 11 ☐ Cocky, plausible, charming, craven braggart,
- D 11 ☐ Knows everyone local, but no-one well, resents Race (5a)
- C 15
- Ch 16

4b Dinah Scard; F3/F3; N/LN; hp 16/20; AC 9/10; Long sword in kitchen

H/H

- S 15 ☐ Yellow dress, brown cloak with crimson embroidery
- I 15 ☐ Brewer and publican
- W 8 ☐ Quiet, industrious, supportive, pines for her daughter
- D 8 ☐ Invidia who works at the Shrine (3)
- C 11 ☐ Knows the kitchen staff of the Ford Inn, confidante of Goldmeadow (5b)
- Ch 6

4c & 4d Bedurn and Beruth are the Scards' two disappointing sons. They help, listlessly, in the pub, being constantly urged to go adventuring like their father. But both Dinah and Hurnakar know it was Dinah's adventures that earned the money to buy the pub. Beruth knows more than he tells of Angovindatrix Blister(5l)



5 The FORD INN

A building reeking of antiquity; the present structure stands on the site of the original way-station. It has been improved and extended over the centuries and now comprises a fine inn, a farrier's shop, a stable (with horses for sale or hire) and a tackle shop with a dwarf who repairs leatherwork. Recommended prices: all 50% above the norm. The inn is run by Race and his beautiful elven wife, Goldmeadow, both retired adventurers. This loving couple have been going through unhappy times over the last few years, brought about by the decision of their only son, Rathe, to undergo the rigorous and lengthy training at the Magic Users' School (9), where he is now a Conjurer. Rathe took orders under the Master of the school, Fiorratanis, despite the fondest hope of his father that he too would be an adventurer. Goldmeadow, however, understood her son's desire, and this caused discord between her and her husband. It has been three years since Rathe last visited his parents, and both miss him terribly. The subject is best avoided within earshot of Race, and most magic users who know the story stay clear of the Ford Inn.

5a Race; F8/R8; L/LG; hp 60/60; AC 7/8; Long sword in chambers, dagger on person

H/H

- S 17 ☐ Waistcoat over bright shirt, breeches, long coloured stockings, shoes with bright buckles, long clay pipe
- W 15 ☐ Landlord and nobody's fool
- D 11 ☐ Dignified, respected, careful
- C 14 ☐ One of the most famous people in the League, knows many important people, but no particular friends, studiously ignores Hurnakar Scard (4a)
- Ch 11

5b Goldmeadow; E6/F6-MU6; L/LG; hp 30/35 AC 8/10; Long bow in chambers, dagger on person

E/E

- S 16 ☐ Cheerful skirted tunic over trousers tied at ankles, no shoes, usually has flowers in hair
- I 17 ☐ Landlady
- D 13 ☐ Grave, lonely, polite, smells wonderful
- C 10 ☐ Although very famous, her only friend is Dinah (4b), avoids Burbury Flataxe (5d)
- Ch 18

Spell Book: D&D 1(1, 3, 4*, 5, 6, 7, 9);

2(4*, 6, 10, 11);

3(4, 6, 8, 12)

AD&D 1(1, 3, 12*, 15, 16, 20, 22, 27);

2(6*, 7, 8*, 10, 13, 22, 23, 24)

3(9, 12, 18, 24)

5c Berenord; F5/F5; L/LG; hp 25/30; AC 9/10; Battle axe in his room

H/H

- S 15 ☐ Black and brown shirt and trousers, brown boots, red neckerchief
- I 12
- W 9 ☐ Follower of Race, now general factotum at the Inn
- D 9 ☐ Silent, troubled, noble, hairy
- C 9 ☐ Knows some druids from the Communities, but locally only workers at the Inn
- Ch 10

Berenord is a werebear (see DM's Rulebook/Monster Manual). He is in full control of himself and periodically has to ride into the forests to roam in his animal form.

5d Burbury Flataxe; Dw3/F3; L/LG; hp 18/18; AC 4/5; Battle axe in forge

Dw/Dw

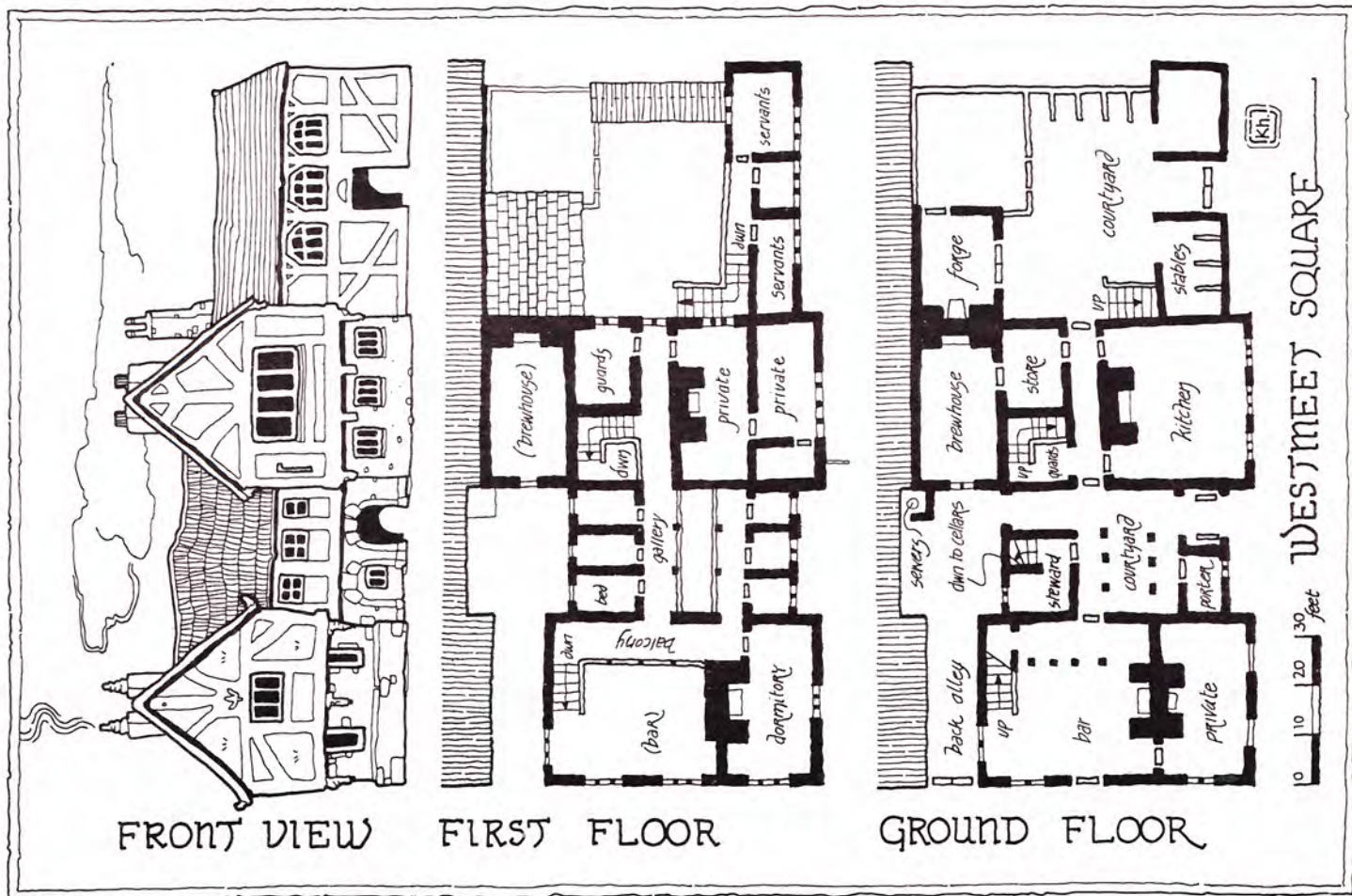
- S 16 ☐ Leather apron over chain mail shirt and grubby green trousers
- I 7
- W 12 ☐ Farrier, long-time associate of Race(5a)
- D 13 ☐ Unusually talkative and friendly, opinionated, pig-ignorant
- C 10 ☐ Many acquaintances, few friends, secretly adores Goldmeadow(5b), Digger (5e) is his son
- Ch 13

5e Digger Flataxe, Dw1/F1, hp 6/7 is Burbury's son. He is the leather repairer and when his dad is not around behaves very much like him. Rather overfond of the odd tippie.

5f & 5g Flaxen Billy and Jos are the two, boring, uninformative stable boys.

5h & 5i Potboy One and Potboy Two (real names Vax and Vox Bigant) are twins who serve, brew and clean. They think and talk alike and are totally indistinguishable except that, when asked questions not concerned with the business of the Inn, One always lies and Two always tells the truth!

5j, 5k & 5l Beryl Blister and her daughters, Wilbertina and Angovidinrix do the cooking. Angovidinrix is having a sweet romance with Beruth (4d).



6 The ARMOURERS

There is no love lost between the dwarven armourer, Gert, and her near neighbours, the elven weaponsmiths (7). The resident armourer had never been over-fond of the weaponsmiths, but since Gert took up residence the lack of warmth soon became hatred: she despises them. Good sense and a restraining partner mean that she restricts her violent assaults to the verbal kind, much to the amusement of the other occupants of the square. Nevertheless, she is one of the finest armourers in Docklands, and with Thokrin the jeweller produces articles of enviable quality (and price!). Whilst Gert and Thokrin lavish their skill and passion on the sumptuous items, their apprentices get on with the business of providing reliable armour for adventurers. A mundane activity which, if the truth were known, actually provides the real income of the business.

6a Gert Rusty; Dw6/F6; N/NG; hp 36/40; AC1/1; Battleaxe

Dw/Dw

- S 17 ☐ Immaculate, **breastplate +2** over leather shirt and treads
I 9 ☐ Armourer
W 12 ☐ Hot-blooded, honest, single-minded
D 11 ☐ Knows and known by local dwarves, loves Burbury Flataxe (5d) – and makes no secret of it – and therefore hates elves all the more.
C 13
Ch 10

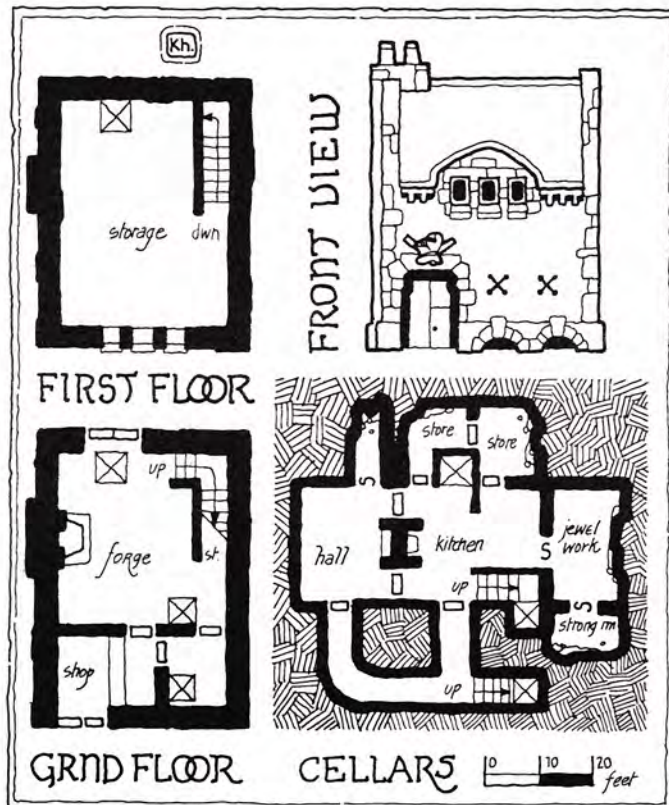
6b Thokrin Silver-Eye; Dw7/F7; N/NG; hp 40/46; AC 6/8; No weapon

Dw/Dw

- S 14 ☐ Shining, intricately adorned, leathers over scarlet shirt, silver eye shield hides empty socket
I 15 ☐ Jeweller
W 15 ☐ Fussy, easily upset, lisps
D 13 ☐ Knows and known by local dwarves, also knows one or two minor bureaucrats
C 12
Ch 15

6c Kon Underrock is the Dw5/F5 hp 20/20 shopkeeper who deals with ordinary customers. He also acts as cook and housekeeper. A friendly, stupid chap.

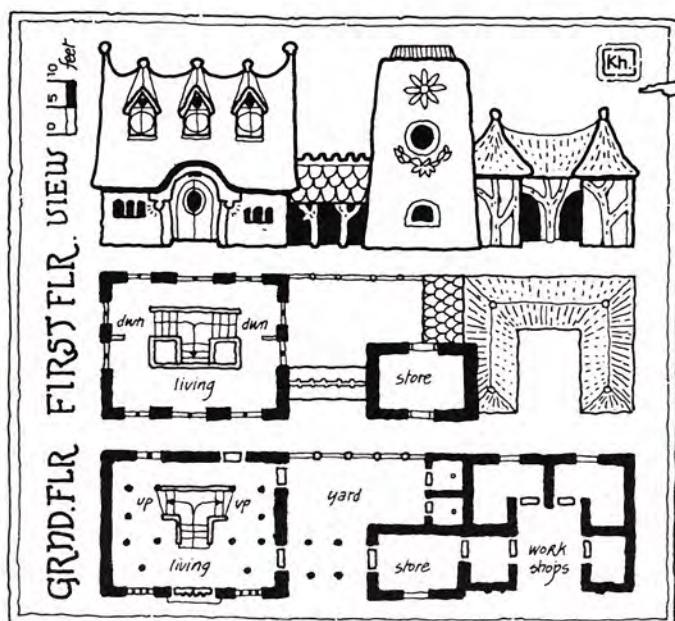
6d, 6e, 6f, 6g & 6h Gert has 5 apprentices — 3 dwarves (Tolly Kobold-Killer, Baggy Bluenose and Biffer) and 2 gnomes (Kiril the Hungry and Paternoster Abstentangree).



6i, 6j & 6k Thokrin has 3 apprentices — 2 dwarves (Wampateak Imp and Mok Incer) and 1 gnome (Pinter Abstentangree).

It is by sheer coincidence that two of the gnomes are called Abstentangree as they are entirely unrelated. These youngsters work hard and get their fun chucking bricks through the windows of the local merchants.

7 The WEAPON DESIGNERS' WORKSHOP



7a Wetherlam; E2/F2-MU2; L/LG; hp 8/8 AC 7/8; Longsword

E/E

- S 12 ☐ Green robes
I 13 ☐ Swordsman
W 11 ☐ Aloof, cool, uncommunicative
D 16 ☐ Knows no-one other than his colleagues
C 12
Ch 12

Over the generations (and for an elf, a generation is a long time!) this group of weapon-makers have become renowned for their standardized weapon design. Almost completely lacking in flair, they produce straightforward, reliable weapons at a sensible price; just don't ask for extras, that's all. The group is entirely male, and has been so since records were first kept. Periodically, as if answering some unheard call, a young male elf will arrive at the shop to work his apprenticeship, and an older elf will move on to new adventures. Currently five elves live and work in the workshop.

7b Blencathra; E2/F2-MU2; L/LG; hp 8/8; AC 7/7; Longbow

E/E

- S 9 ☐ Green robes
I 13 ☐ Bowyer
W 8 ☐ Aloof, chats endlessly about bows if pressed
D 17 ☐ Knows no-one other than his colleagues
C 12
Ch 9

7c Skiddaw; E2/F2-MU2; L/LG; hp 9/9; AC 8/9; Longbow

E/E

- S 14 ☐ Yellow robes
I 12 ☐ Fletcher
W 14 ☐ Initially aloof, friendly, humorous, cheeky
D 15 ☐ Knows no-one other than his colleagues
C 8
Ch 8

7d & 7e Lingmell and Grasmoor are the two apprentices, the first performing basic blacksmithing and the second leather-work and carving. They, too, know no-one other than their colleagues.

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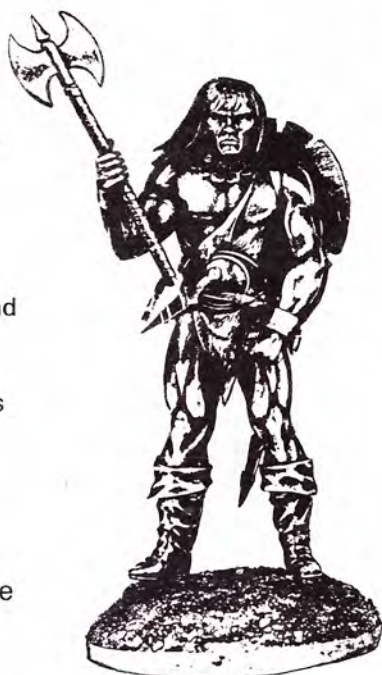
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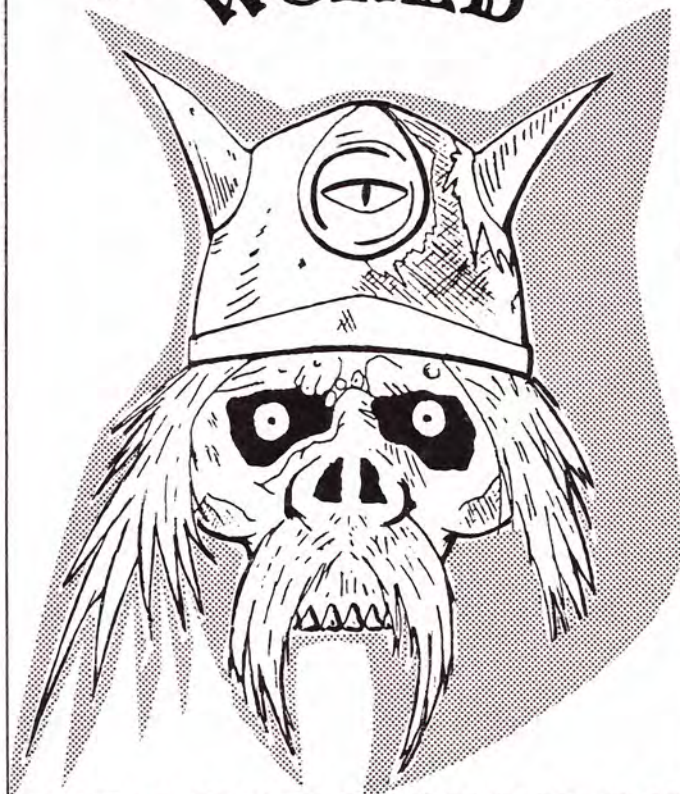
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As reviewed in

WHITE DWARF

37

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ILLUMINATIONS

Model Grenadier

Remember the riddle of the Mammoth's Trunk (*Illuminations*, #15)? Well, indebted though I am to those countless thousands of zoologists, biologists, bikers, mummy and daddy mammoths and British Rail sandwich makers who took the trouble to write in and explain the precise physiology of a mammoth's trunk, I now know what it is that dangles from the face of Grenadier's **War Mammoth of the Undead Legion**. It is not a skeletal trunk. It is trunk armour, made up of jointed metal plates. There is a good reason for this appendage. Since we seem to be alone, I shall whisper to you intimate details of design development as practised by creators of Skeleton Mammoths. After sculpting in loving detail his accurate boney monster, the artist in question accosts a passing fellow designer. 'Hey Al', he cries, 'Whaddya think of *this*?' He proudly indicates his masterpiece. 'Yeah!' shouted Al in an enthusiastic American way. 'A skeleton war mouse with howdah and diminutive but beautifully detailed, flash-free, infant hobbit (oops, halfling) crew. Terrific!!' He strides away. The mammoth designer is shocked. But, reaching for a supportive Budweiser, he recognises the truth. No-one would know it was a mammoth. Being bright, he sees that people

expect trunks on pachyderms. He also knows that trunks don't have skeletons. Thus is born the trunk armour and yet another example of mundane necessity giving rise to high art.

The second model in Grenadier's Masterpiece range is now available. This is a **Death Dragon** of the Undead Legion with rider. As with the Mammoth, it is an excellent piece of work, original and well executed. The same company are producing a new range of the more usual, flesh covered dragons as well. They are a part of the Dragonlords series and so far there have been four released — Black, White, Red and Brass. Eventually the range will consist of 12 different dragons, each accompanied by an altar. The 12 altars are designed to fit together, thus forming the legendary 'Ring of the Dragonlords'.

In the mood for something a little different? One of Grenadier's upcoming releases is **Heroes of the Bible**. This little boxed set contains 25mm models of Moses, Noah, Goliath and David, plus inspirational story book, paints and painting guide. A fairly powerful argument against those misguided folk who believe that RPGs celebrate the Dark Forces at the expense of the Light.

New Outlets for Virgin

Virgin Games Centre is now well and truly established in its Oxford Street home. While not being the only centre London games shop (and I apologise to Just Games for missing them out in my issue 12 piece on Games Centre), they are the inheritors of the old Games Centre mantle and so it is of interest to enquire how are they getting on? The answer seems to be 'very nicely thanks'. Virgin's games retailing operation is now under the experienced hand of ex-Games Workshop man Bob Malin. Their trading in Oxford Street has obviously persuaded them that games are a good business to be in because they are already thinking about new outlets elsewhere. They have a distinct advantage in that many Virgin record shops throughout the country have spare floors which can be utilised as games shops. Thus they don't have the trouble of finding suitable premises. Likely venues for new Virgin Games Shops in the near future include Scotland (Edinburgh or Glasgow) and Leeds. This must be good news for everyone concerned about the future of hobby gaming. More top quality outlets will result in more business for producers and better service for customers. A happy coincidence of interest all round.

Transatlantic Tales

Red faces time. We've been bragging about the **Marvel Superheroes** rpg over the last few months, and since it was released in the USA in June, if things had followed their normal route, you could be rushing out to buy it here now. Alas, there is a little hitch. Our cousins at Lake Geneva who forged the deal with Marvel forgot about the big wide world outside the USA. No-one thought to tell TSR UK about it either, which accounts for our optimism. Well, before you give up hope, let me tell you that the full weight of British management (namely Don Turnbull, publisher of this very magazine) has taken up *direct* negotiation with Marvel. We all hope that this will lead to the game arriving here before long at a more reasonable price than is currently charged by those entrepreneurs who have imported it on the QT.

Workshop of the Mind

There is a fair selection of new stuff coming our way via Games Workshop at the moment. Pride of place must go to their UK printing of **Call of Cthulhu**. This popular game (heavily featured in *IMAGINE* magazine #13) is now at the much more buyable price of £9.95. Such is the current weakness of the pound vis-a-vis the dollar that printing a game in the UK brings dramatic price benefits. There are also a number of new scenarios for Cthulhu including **Masks of Nyarlathotep** from Chaosium and **Glozal est Authentique** from Theatre of the Mind. Jon Sutherland of Games Workshop (he also writes *White Dwarf's* news page — I bet he never thought he would get his name into *Illuminations*) gave me a brief résumé of the plot of the latter but it is as twisted as the title and it proved a little too much for me to understand. There seem to be

two adventures in Glozal, one about an artifact and the other set in Russia in the 1920s but that is as far as I got. Later this year, Games Workshop are bringing out a **Cthulhu Sourcepack** for adventures in Britain and Europe.

If you are looking for a ready-made campaign for your fantasy role playing, GW have the 'Harn' series just for you. It comprises a number of glossy, colourful books the first of which is called, reasonably enough, **Harn**. It costs £15.95. This contains the basic information on the continent of Harn. Next is **Cities of Harn** and there are also four volumes of the **Encyclopedia Harnica** at £4.95 each. As **Cities** is £8.95, the whole set is rather pricey, but it does give you a lot of information, presented in an attractive way. The Harn Campaign is suitable for use with any FRP system.

Extra!

4th Column

Things have been quiet in the degenerate world of *Car Wars* recently, but just when I thought it was safe to take my poodle for a walk again, the peace is shattered by the throaty roar of **Car Wars Expansion Kit 5** scorching into town, closely slipstreamed by another hairy-armed Autoventure blockbuster **Ultraforce**, which is also suitable for Battlecars. No prices yet but if you've got polystyrene between your ears and delusions of adequacy, you're bound to love them both.

The long-awaited **Star Fleet Battles Commanders Rulebook Vol 2** is now available at £9.95. Contrary to popular opinion, the long delay was not caused by the publisher being unable to find enough *Letraset* to print the title. The belated emergence of this tome finishes the transfer of the material previously published in the Expansion Sets into the more convenient and coherent format of the Commanders Rulebooks. All the old expansion kits are now, in Jon Sutherland's word, 'dumped'.

Citadel Miniatures have moved from their old premises and are proudly sending a colour postcard illustrating their new home to anyone with a letterbox. To be honest, the building looks like the laundry annexe to the Ministry of Truth, being from the shoebox-realist style of architecture, but doubtless it is very cosy inside. It certainly seems to be an improvement on their old place and is an indication of the kind of success they are currently enjoying.

Citadel have also announced that they will no longer be selling unpackaged figures. This is an ever-present bone of contention in the figures world. Broadly speaking, consumers prefer unpackaged, while manufacturers and retailers prefer packaged. It has been an uphill struggle persuading the British public to accept packaged figures but it would appear from Citadel's decision that the struggle is more or less won. Or is this an attempt at a *fait accompli*? Interesting to see that Citadel are intending to bring out plastic figures. They are described as being toy-sized but whether this means 54mm or something the size of TSR's own plastic figures, is not yet clear.

Dialog



My Alter Ego was reading **IMAGINE**™ magazine again instead of working in the dungeon — incorrigible lad — and soon found something of interest.

'Golliwoggles, Puls, look here. TSR begins to discover the combination combat table and the graduated saving throw table that fans have been using since 1975-76.'

I looked at the article in issue 13. 'But they haven't gone far enough, Alter. If you take the lowest hit probability as a base, and convert character class and level to a bonus number to be added to the dice roll, you can include the weapons modifications in the all-purpose combat table. For example, the Lakofka/Gygax table, if MU 1 is +0, then MU 4-5 is +2, as is fighter level 1, cleric level 1-2, etc. The method was described in an article I wrote for **WHITE DWARF** called "Arms at the Ready" I think, but instead of printing the resulting table they took three times as much space to print a less convenient form, a table for every weapon instead of one line for every weapon.'

'You also briefly described the method in **GAMEPLAY**.'

'Um, yes. And this method — which I know many people have devised independently — has another advantage over the table in **IMAGINE**. When you fight a monster not wearing any armour, you don't even need to look at the table. 22 minus armour class gives the basic 'to hit' number, and each character adds his individual weapon bonus plus other bonuses for strength and magic weapon. If the monster wears armour, so that one needs to use weapons modifications, you need to look up the base chance to hit for each different kind of weapon — but only once, not a separate calculation for each character class. I'll send **IMAGINE** magazine a copy of my version of this table.'

'Didn't you send a copy, along with some spell record-keeping stuff, to **DRAGON** to look at?'

'Just the tables, not an article, Alter, but they said they were sure most people had already worked out satisfactory play aids for themselves. Later they published the L/G table. I guess most people don't count when the designer speaks, even if he's eight years behind the times.'

'Any comment about the other official and not-so-official additions to the **AD&D**® game?'

'I don't care whether they're official or not. I remember in a game in Chelsea many years ago, I let someone play a bard — the old, never-to-be-sufficiently-criticized bard.'

'You mean worse than the official gross-and-ridiculous bard?'

'Yes, the old one from **STRATEGIC REVIEW**, the magazine-before-**DRAGON**. Anyway, I let him play it because he wanted to, though I wasn't familiar with all the rules. Unfortunately, the fellow was either confused or a cheat, because he had that Bard doing things even *that* gross class couldn't do at his level, figuring percentages wrongly and forgetting modifiers. When I found out, I was annoyed enough to decide I wouldn't referee for any character class I regard as over-powered or ridiculous, or one I don't know, regardless of origins. For example, at first reading the barbarian is truly gross, though it seemed less so — still pretty bad — the second time around, and I'm unlikely to use it.'

'A lot of players would say a referee is obligated to accept every 'official' addition to the game.'

'As long as it's made clear before the game starts, Alter, a referee has every right to reject any character class or oddball pet or strange magic item — even "official" ones. After all, Advanced

Views from over the Atlantic by Lew Pulsipher

is such a vast game, made to cater to so many different tastes, cobbled together over many years, that no one, and no world, could possibly incorporate all facets of the game. Besides, I have doubts about how much some of the new classes have been tested. Designing a character class is as hard as designing a simple boardgame, and takes longer, I think, for adequate play-testing. I start a class three-four years before it's published, and I abandon more than half the starts after the first typed draft, which represents a lot of work. With his work load and what he's said about the difficulty of finding time to work on the game and play it, does EGG have time to design classes properly? The new ones just don't make it.'

'Puls, you grouch, get up on the other side of the bed tomorrow.'

'We're all entitled to complain occasionally, and I'm not done. In response to an article I sent to **IMAGINE** a while ago, the editor's chief minion said it was "too practical". I nearly fell over. How can anything be too practical in a magazine which, one might assume, is intended to be practical, to inform the readers, to educate.'

'Come on Puls, where's your streak of cynicism?'

'You're my cynicism, Alter.'

'OK, let's not get cynical — hmm, sounds like a song title. **IMAGINE** (and **WHITE DWARF**, too) is trying to expand its readership rapidly. How do you do that. Try to throw in as many different bits/ topics as you can, in order to suck in people who are interested in just that topic — say movies, or science fiction reviews, actual SF/F stories, fanzines, computers, whatever. Then think about the supposed characteristics of a mass readership, any mass readership. Impulse buying (hence **WHITE DWARF**'s new emphasis on inside colour to attract), short attention span and general laziness, a desire for immediate gratification. And the new readers will probably be younger, on the average, than the veteran readers. So, don't give them anything that makes them think hard, don't give them anything that won't make them feel good immediately, avoid anything too long.'

'In a word, emphasize entertainment and let education or information you can use tomorrow fend for itself.'

'Yeah. And that's how something can be "too practical". No matter how much time it might save readers, or how much effort and aggravation they might avoid — that's what your article was aimed at, if I recall it — if it isn't entertaining, forget it. so, much of the material in the magazine will be enjoyable to read, but the reader will carry nothing away with him. Five minutes afterwards, he'll be no better off than if he'd never read the piece. Cartoons and fictional pieces are like that, for example.'

'And unfortunately, not everything that's informative can also be entertaining, or if it can, not without increasing the length 40-50%. Many magazines build a reputation through supplying useful information, then change direction when they try to expand their audience rapidly. I wonder what **IMAGINE** readers, especially those who started with the early issues, would say about the question of entertainment vs useful information/education.'

'Maybe they could take a vote by raising hands.'

'Don't get sarcastic, Alter. Cynicism or skepticism can help answer questions, sarcasm doesn't. At least editors might ask readers to send in letters about the question.'

MAGIC & MAYHEM

IN CELTIC HISTORY AND LITERATURE

by Graeme Davis



'The whole race... is madly fond of war, high-spirited and quick to battle'
Strabo (c. 63 BC - AD 21)

This observation, made when the Roman Empire was assimilating the newly-conquered Celts of Gaul, holds true throughout Celtic history, from the Roman conquests of Gaul and Britain and the Dark-Age 'Celtic Revival' which spawned the earliest Arthurian legends to the Norman and Tudor campaigns in Ireland. Celtic society centred around a warrior aristocracy in the same way as that of the 'heroic age' Greece of Homer, and a great deal of surviving Celtic literature and tradition concerns itself with warfare and heroic deeds.

The weapons of the 'classic' Celtic warrior were sword, shield and spear; 'their spears have points as long as swords,' wrote the Roman Diodorus Siculus of the Gauls. Archaeological finds of swords from this period in Europe show an average length in the region of three feet from pommel to point, in marked contrast to the short stabbing sword of the Roman legionary. Scabbards had decorative bronze fittings, often faced with bronze, and decorated with the circular and spiral patterns characteristic of Celtic art.

Two kinds of spear were used: a light javelin or throwing-spear, of which the warrior usually had more than one, and a heavier fighting spear (Irish *craisech*) used in closer combat. Diodorus Siculus

records that the heads of some spears are forged 'with breaks throughout their entire length, so that the blow not only cuts but also tears the flesh, and the recovery of the spear tears open the wound'; Cu Chulainn's spear Gae Bolga is said to have many barbs.

Shields were made of wood or leather, rectangular or oval in shape, and large enough to protect the whole body. The boss was bronze, with relief decoration, and sometimes other decorative fittings. The most luxurious shields had facings of sheet-bronze, like that found in the Thames at Battersea and now in the British Museum. This shield is about half normal size, and apparently was never intended for use in battle; it is thought to have been produced to be deliberately offered to the god of the river. The Irish epic *Tain Bo Cuailgne* (the Cattle-Raid of Cooley) mentions shields with sharpened rims, and says that 'when Cu Chulainn did the feat of the shield-rim he could shear with his shield as sharply as a spear or sword,' but there is no mention of this tactic outside these sagas, and this may be one of many exaggerations which have crept into the story between the events it records (thought on archaeological grounds to be in the 1st or 2nd century AD) and the time that it was first written down in about the 7th century.

Apart from the shield, most warriors wore a helmet of some kind. Diodorus Siculus mentions 'large bronze helmets with large projecting figures lending the appearance of enormous stature to the wearer; in some cases horns.... in other cases.... the foreparts of birds or animals',

and Cu Chulainn's equipment in the *Tain Bo Cuailgne* included a crested battle-helmet. The helmet covered the head only; nasals and eye guards are a Scandinavian development. It is worth mentioning, while on the subject of the Vikings, that they never wore the horned and decorated helmets for which they have later become famous; these were a purely Celtic item.

Use of body armour varied. Diodorus Siculus mentions that some Gauls used a chainmail shirt or hauberk, while others entered battle completely naked. It is thought that going naked into battle invoked some ritual or magical protection, although this extravagant scorning of danger seems in keeping with Celtic bravado. Cu Chulainn's armour in the *Tain Bo Cuailgne* consisted of 'twenty seven tunics of waxed skin, plated and pressed together.... over them he put on his heroic deep battle-belt of stiff, tough, tanned leather from the choicest parts of the hides of seven yearlings, covering him from his narrow waist to the thickness of his armpit'; clearly some kind of leather armour, although the number of tunics must be an exaggeration.

A distinctive feature of warfare among some communities was chariot-fighting. Caesar first encountered chariots in Britain; although Diodorus Siculus mentions them in Gaul, his information probably comes from the lost account of Posidonius, a Greek who travelled in Gaul some two hundred years earlier. They seem to have been dying out in Britain when Caesar encountered them, for no mention appears in accounts of the Roman conquest of Britain in AD 43. Chariots figure prominently in the Irish sagas, and we are allowed a glimpse of some of the etiquette surrounding them. The Celtic chariot was drawn by a pair of horses, and was open at the front and back with a pair of semicircular wicker sides. It carried the noble warrior and his charioteer, and Caesar describes British chariot-fighting as follows:

'In chariot-fighting the Britons begin by diving all over the field hurling javelins.... then.... they jump down from the chariots and engage on foot. In the meantime, their charioteers retire a short distance from the battle and place the chariots in such a position that their masters, if hard pressed by numbers, have an easy means of retreat to their own lines. Thus, they combine the mobility of cavalry with the staying power of infantry.'

From the Irish sagas, it is clear that the chariot and charioteer were as much the mark of the true hero as the charger and squire to later chivalry. The charioteer was comparable in status and function to the knight's squire, and was normally



regarded as noncombatant except in outright war; it was far more prestigious to send him home with his master's body and the story of how a mighty warrior overcame him. In the Irish sagas, if a chariot drew up with its left (ie shield) side facing an encountered warrior, this was an insult to be washed out in blood.

There is no archaeological evidence for the use of scythe-blades attached to chariot-wheels, which would have caused as much damage to friend as to foe; although Cu Chulainn is said to use a 'sickle-chariot' in the Tain Bo Cuailgne, this may be an invention or exaggeration.

The use of chariots was restricted to the nobility. Those who could afford them, typically freehold farmers, would have ridden horses, while the peasantry fought on foot. Swords, because of their cost, would have been restricted to the upper echelons of society, as would shields and helmets to a lesser extent, but even the meanest peasant would have had a spear of some kind.

Other weapons included slings and, to a lesser extent, bows. These would have been used mainly for hunting and fowling, and not in battle. The nobility preferred fighting at close quarters. Cu Chulainn, the archetypal Irish hero, was highly skilled in the use of the sling, but never used it in battle. It seems mainly to have been a weapon for peasants and boys, to hunt rabbits and wildfowl, but the discovery of piles of slingstones at the Iron Age hillfort of Maiden Castle attests to its use in war, again probably by peasants and youths.

Daggers were also common, but were seldom used except in brawls. The axe does not appear to have been utilised until fairly late; no mention of it is found in the classical writers or the Irish sagas, but it is found occasionally in the Welsh myths of the Mabinogion, which mostly reflect events in the Dark Ages. The axe was used as a weapon by the Saxons whom Arthur fought after the Romans left Britain, and may not have been introduced to the repertoire of the Celtic warrior until then. The Norman writer Gerald de Barri (Gerald of Wales, c1146-1223) says that the Irish 'always carry an axe in their hand as if it were a staff', but by the time he was writing, Ireland had been influenced by Viking settlers. Thus the axe does not seem to have been a native Celtic weapon. Later, the galloglach (the 'gallowglass' mentioned by Shakespeare in 'Macbeth') played an important role in 14-16th century Ireland. The name means 'foreign warriors', and they were mercenaries recruited from the Gallo-Scandinavian inhabitants of the Western Isles of Scotland. Their distinctive weapon was the gallowglass, a heavy,

long-handled battleaxe or short poleaxe.

Other weapons were not common. Clubs were used by less civilised churls and a few of the ogre/giant types encountered in Celtic literature, and in one case iron flails are mentioned, but these are most exceptional.

In addition to his sword, spears and shield, Cu Chulainn is said to have used eight small darts; he and his foster-brother Ferdia duel with darts on the first day of their epic combat in the Tain Bo Cuailgne. In the Mabinogion, Peredur uses a handful of darts made of holly wood. Darts are not recorded elsewhere, although the Greek geographer Strabo mentions that the Gauls used 'a wooden weapon resembling the grosphos, thrown by hand and not by a strap.... and which they use mostly for bird-hunting as well as for battle'. The Greek word grosphos translates literally as 'javelin', but he has already described the spears and javelins used by the Gauls, and his reference to a throwing-strap might suggest that he is describing some kind of dart.

There are few magical weapons in Celtic literature. The accent is always on the prowess of the hero, and the need for a magical weapon would be tantamount to an admission of weakness. The size and quality of weapons are exaggerated; spears are described as being a heavy burden for a team of oxen, for example, and swords are said to be so bright that they light an entire house, but magic is very rarely mentioned.

Fionn mac Cumhail (*Finn MacCool*) had a sword called Mac-a-Luin which would cut through any obstacle at a single blow, and mentioned in the stories about him are 'a spear of nine enchantments' and 'a spear of seven enchantments' whose precise qualities are not made clear. Cu Chulainn's gae bolga is described in the Tain Bo Cuailgne as follows:

'The gae bolga had to be made ready for use on a stream and cast from the fork of the toes. It entered a man's body with a single wound, like a javelin, then opened into thirty barbs. Only by cutting away the flesh could it be taken from the body.'

On several occasions when Cu Chulainn fights a foe of equal prowess, it is gae bolga which wins the battle. It seems only to be usable while fighting in water (in a ford, for example), and Cu Chulainn's charioteer invariably sends it to him on the water, whereupon he catches and casts it with the toes of his right foot. While it is regarded by some as a magical weapon, it might also be seen as a feat of arms using a barbed spear. It is listed among the feats and skills taught to Cu Chulainn during his training with the warrior-woman Scathack, and his opponents are often said to have all of his skills

and feats except the gae bolga, which was taught to no one else.

One distinctive magical weapon of the Irish stories is the tathlum. The tathlum was a weapon of great power made from a severed human head; it being the custom throughout the Celtic races to collect the heads of opponents defeated in battle. Diodorus Siculus writes with some horror 'they cut off the heads of enemies slain in battle.... and they nail up these (heads) upon their houses like.... wild animals from the hunt. They embalm in cedar oil the heads of the most distinguished enemies.... and display them with pride to strangers', and a number of Celtic ritual sites and objects in Europe feature the severed head very prominently as an object of mystic significance. The normal practice was to obtain the head of a person close to the intended victim — the closer the relationship, the greater the power of the weapon — and rather than embalming it, as would be usual, to coat it in several layers of lime until it was hard as cement. If the lime could be obtained from the territory of the intended victim, the power of the weapon was again increased. When thrown at the victim, the tathlum would normally kill outright, and at the very least would cause a grievous wound.

The rarity of magical items in Irish tradition is underlined by the fact that the Tuatha De Dannan, the semi-divine race who later became the elflike Sidhe, had only four, for all their sorcerous powers — the cauldron of the Dagda, the spear of Lug, the sword of Nuada and the stone of Fal (see also **IMAGINE** magazine, #5, p39).

In Welsh mythology they are slightly more common. Bran is given a magical cauldron (which, incidentally, originally came from Ireland, and might be connected with the cauldron of the Dagda) which has the property of restoring life. 'Take a man who has been slain today,' he is told, 'and throw him into it, and tomorrow he will fight as well as ever, only he will not be able to speak'. This may be a form of resurrection or even zombie animation, although necromancy of that kind is unknown in Celtic literature. Math has a magic wand with which he punishes his evil nephews by turning them into a variety of animals, each form lasting a year, and Pryderi and Rhiannon are imprisoned in a strange castle when they touch a golden cup chained to a marble fountain and are paralysed.

The hero Culhwch is set several tasks in order to win the hand of Olwen, daughter of the Chief Giant Ysbaddaden; these include obtaining a number of magical artifacts, including the Harp of

continued on page 46

Lore, Lay & Legend

Carole Morris takes another look at the Celtic myths



In the last Celtic special (#5, August 1983), I set the background for and related some of the myths about a deity and a hero of the Celtic Mythos — Lugh and Cuchulain. Now, I shall continue explaining the old myths and beliefs of the Celtic-speaking peoples by relating some of the legends about Mananan, Nuada and Arawn. There are sometimes noticeable differences between the accepted myths and the details of the AD&D® characters in the Celtic Mythos of the **DEITIES & DEMI-GODS™ Cyclopedia** (DDG), but I will once again seek to compare the two, and perhaps increase players' knowledge about more of their favourite deities and heroes

Mananan mac Lir, God of the Sea.

Lir, the father of Mananan, is sometimes portrayed as the vast presence of the sea, and sometimes as an invisible deity who lived on the fairy mountain of Slieve Fuad south of Armagh. It is his son, Mananan, who is often referred to as the Celtic God of the Sea, and the Islands of the Dead were supposed to lie beneath or beyond his kingdom. Mananan helped lead men across his kingdom to the Realm of the Dead in the same way that Charon the ferryman transported the dead across the River Styx in Greek Mythology. In Irish legend, then, Mananan ruled the waters which encircled Ireland. The Isle of Man (which can sometimes be seen from the coast of Ireland) was said to be the high throne of Mananan who gave his name to the island.

Mananan was an illusionist and master of all the sorts of trickery which use illusions. This is a contrast to Mananan of the DDG (p28) who does not seem to have any illusionist abilities, but fights with magical weapons and calls on sea creatures as might a druid.

Mananan owned many different magical items — treasures which Lugh the All-craftsman, the Long-armed, borrowed and brought to Ireland (see #5, p40). One was the fabulous ship *Ocean-Traveller* which could read the minds of men. The craft could interpret a command sent directly from the thoughts of whoever sailed it, and obeyed immediately. It could travel wherever he wished, and could move without the power of either sail or oars (the magical nature of this craft is an example of a tradition commonly found in Celtic Mythology where living qualities are attributed to normally lifeless objects; The Stone of Destiny — Lia Fail — roared loudly when a rightful king of Ireland was crowned, Cuchulain's sword spoke, and the Dagda's harp could fly to its master's hands when called).

Mananan's horse was the gallant steed Aonbarr who could gallop over the surfaces of both land and sea. The waves of the sea, with their white-crested manes were also known as the horses of Mananan. Celtic Mythology, especially from Irish sources, is full of colourful symbolism. Ireland was encircled by the sea, the realm of Mananan, as a mantle envelops its wearer. Thus, we are told, Mananan wore a great mantle which could change its colour like a chameleon, and which could take on as many multi-coloured shades and hues as the sea itself. When enemies invaded Ireland, they are said to have been troubled by the

thunder of Mananan's feet and the billowing and flapping of his mantle as he crossed their camp in the night. This imagery is so realistic when we consider the fury and power unleashed by a stormy sea.

Another of the magical treasures Lugh brought to Ireland was Mananan's sword *Fragarach* — 'The Answerer' which could cut through any armour, whatever its properties. In the DDG (p28), Mananan uses a sword called 'Retaliator' which is probably the equivalent of this legendary weapon, but has different properties. 'Retaliator' kills every time it hits unless a saving throw is made.

Celtic Legends which mention Mananan are not usually tales about his own adventures, but instead relate how he was involved in the lives of other heroic characters. One of these is the story of the maiden Ethné. Mananan had a daughter whom he placed in the care of a Danaan prince called Angus the Young, son of the Dagda. Angus was often looked on as the Celtic God of Love. His home was a fairy palace at the mound of New Grange (it is interesting that Celtic Legends often mention fairy mounds along the River Boyne — Cuchulain was given to the Warriors of Ulster at the fairy mound of Nagus. These mounds are the prehistoric chambered tumuli or graves of neolithic Ireland which still survive today and which must have generated many myths and legends over the years).

Angus' steward also had a daughter, Ethné, who became a handmaiden to Mananan's daughter. Angus' household prospered and was fed by Mananan's magical pigs which could be killed and eaten one day and would come alive again magically to be eaten once more the next day. One day, Angus discovered that Ethné was eating nothing at all. Mananan himself came to Brugh na Boyna to discover the reason for her behaviour. He discovered that one of the Danaan chieftains had fallen in love with Ethné and had forced his attentions upon her. This had awoken a pure spirit in the girl, and an angel of the True God had come to protect her. After this time, she abstained from all earthly food and was nourished by the spirit of God. Here, surely, we see Old Celtic and Christian traditions interwoven. This is easy to understand since the legends of the old pagan Celtic religion have been preserved over time in a land which was converted to Christianity in the 5th century AD.

The story goes on to tell how Mananan and Angus travelled to Eastern lands and brought back two magical cows whose milk would never run dry, and Ethné consented to be nourished by this milk.

Two deities from Welsh Celtic Legends



are Manawyddan and his father Llyr. They are clearly the counterparts of Mananan and Lir in slightly different versions of the same basic Celtic Mythos.

Nuada, God of the Silver Hand.

As I related in #5 (p39), legend tells of the Danaans or 'People of Dana' who were legendary invaders and settlers of Ireland. They were a mythical race who were regarded as gods, although Christian influences later reduced their status to that of fairies. Before them, another race called the Firbolgs had come to Ireland, and although they play little part in Celtic Mythology, one story tells of their conflict with the Danaans, and it is at this time we are first introduced to Nuada.

Ambassadors from both sides had met together, and Bres, the Danaan representative, suggested that the Firbolgs and the Danaans should divide Ireland between them and ally themselves together against future enemies. The Firbolgs, however, would not accept this suggestion, and the two sides then fought a battle on the Plains of Moytura in Co Mayo.

The Danaans were led into battle by Nuada (who is portrayed as the God of War in the DDG, p29). It was in this first battle that Nuada lost his hand which was cut off while he fought. One of the skilled Danaan craftsmen/physicians, Dian-cecht, created Nuada a new glittering hand of solid silver, and from that time onwards he was known as Nuada the Silver-handed.

The Danaans won a great victory and the Firbolg king mac Erc was killed. After the battle, Nuada would probably have become the king of all the Danaans immediately, but he was now mutilated and it was a tradition that no-one with such a major disability could be a king in Ireland. The person chosen to be king, however, soon became very unpopular; he was an oppressor who overtaxed his subjects and allowed the enemy Fomorians to do the same. It was not long before he was made to relinquish his throne, and Nuada was chosen to be king despite his mutilation. It was during his reign that Lugh of the Long Arm came to Nuada's palace at Tara to offer his services, and was thereafter called 'Ildanach' — the All-Craftsman (#5, p39).

Nuada fought in the second Battle of the Plains of Moytura, but was laid low by the evil gaze from Balor's single eye which could kill anyone he looked at in anger. It was Lugh who succeeded in killing the one-eyed Fomorian king, and who then reigned as king in Nuada's place.

As we have seen with Mananan, there are parallel characters in Irish and Welsh

Mythology. In the Welsh Mabinogion, a sun-god called Nudd (whose name is often written as Lludd) is mentioned; legend sometimes attributes him with the epithet 'Silver-handed'. Nuada and Nudd are therefore probably the same deity in different versions of the Celtic Mythos.

Arawn, Lord of the Dead.

The last character of the Celtic Mythos whose story I shall relate is Arawn, Lord of Annwryn (or Annwn, pronounced *Annoon*), the Land of the Dead in Welsh legend. His tale appears in the first of the four branches of the Mabinogion — a Medieval text embodying pre-Christian myths. As in Celtic Christian Ireland, the gods in these myths have been given a status below that of deities but above that of ordinary mortals.

Arawn must originally have been the Celtic equivalent of the Classical Pluto or Hades, God of the Dead, but in the Mabinogion he is a 'king in Annwryn'. In the DDG (p26), Arawn is the God of the Dead but he appears as a normal man. Arawn does not appear to have a counterpart in Irish legend.

Pwyll, prince of the seven cantreys of Dyfed, went hunting one day in a place called Glyn Cuch. He loosed his dogs in the woodland there and soon lost his companions by following the dogs. Eventually he heard the cry of other hounds, different from his own, coming from the opposite direction. He saw a pack of strange hounds with shining white fur and blood-red ears running down a stag. These were the Hounds of Arawn, and their master was not far behind.

Colour plays an important part in Celtic myth; it is often symbolic of the true nature of something. White fur and red ears, for instance, are the features of hounds from the Underworld, the Land of the Dead or the Land of Youth. In another cycle of Celtic myths, Oisín, a descendant of Nuada, was riding over the sea to the Land of Youth — Tir Nan Og — and he saw a hornless doe being chased by a white dog with one red ear.

Pwyll drove away the strange hounds and began to set his own upon the stag. As he did so, a horseman clad in grey raiment approached him and rebuked him for setting his own hounds on another man's kill. Pwyll realised that he had indeed been extremely discourteous and offered to make amends in whatever way he could. The grey-clad stranger was Arawn who introduced himself as a Lord of Annwryn. He explained that Pwyll could help him by defeating Havgan, the other king in Annwryn, who was forever warring against Arawn and disrupting his land.

Pwyll must change places with Arawn and go to live in Annwryn for a year. After a year, he must enter into single combat with Havgan at a ford over a river. If Havgan is brought down with one stroke, he will die, but on no account must Pwyll (as Arawn) hit him a second time. If Havgan begs to be put out of his misery, Pwyll must refuse, for if this happens, Havgan will become whole and strong once more.

Pwyll agreed to change places with Arawn, and the Lord of the Dead changed their likenesses so that each looked like the other. Arawn then went to rule over Dyfed for a year. Pwyll entered Annwryn, the Land of the Dead, but not even Arawn's own wife could tell that he wasn't the Lord of Annwryn himself. He lived at Arawn's court in the royal palace and spent his time hunting and feasting until the year had passed.

When the fateful night arrived, all the nobles of Arawn's kingdom accompanied him to the appointed place of battle at the ford. One of the knights announced that each king claimed the other's land as his own, and that the survivor of the battle should be the sole lord of all Annwryn. Pwyll (as Arawn) struck Havgan so that the latter's shield and armour were shattered and he was thrown to the ground from his horse, mortally wounded. But, when Havgan begged 'Arawn' to strike a mercy blow, 'Arawn' refused. At this, Havgan realised that he was dying and bade his lords carry him away. All the assembled nobles of both sides swore allegiance to 'Arawn' and together they conquered Havgan's lands, binding the two kingdoms into one.

Pwyll returned to the woods of Glyn Cuch and met once again with the real Lord of Annwryn, who already knew the outcome of the battle. Each returned in his own shape to his own land, but from that day the two remained close friends and sent each other magnificent gifts of horses, and greyhounds, hawks and jewels.

Arawn is reputed to have fought another famous battle at Cad Goddeu which is sometimes known as the Battle of the Trees. He fought with Amaethon ab Don (the brother of the illusionist/sorcerer Gwydion ab Don) who was sometimes looked on as the Celtic God of Agriculture. His name means 'Husband-man'. Amaethon had stolen a white roebuck and a puppy dog from Annwryn, and this act of felony precipitated a fierce battle between the two deities. In the Mabinogion, Cad Goddeu is regarded as one of the three most frivolous battles of Britain!

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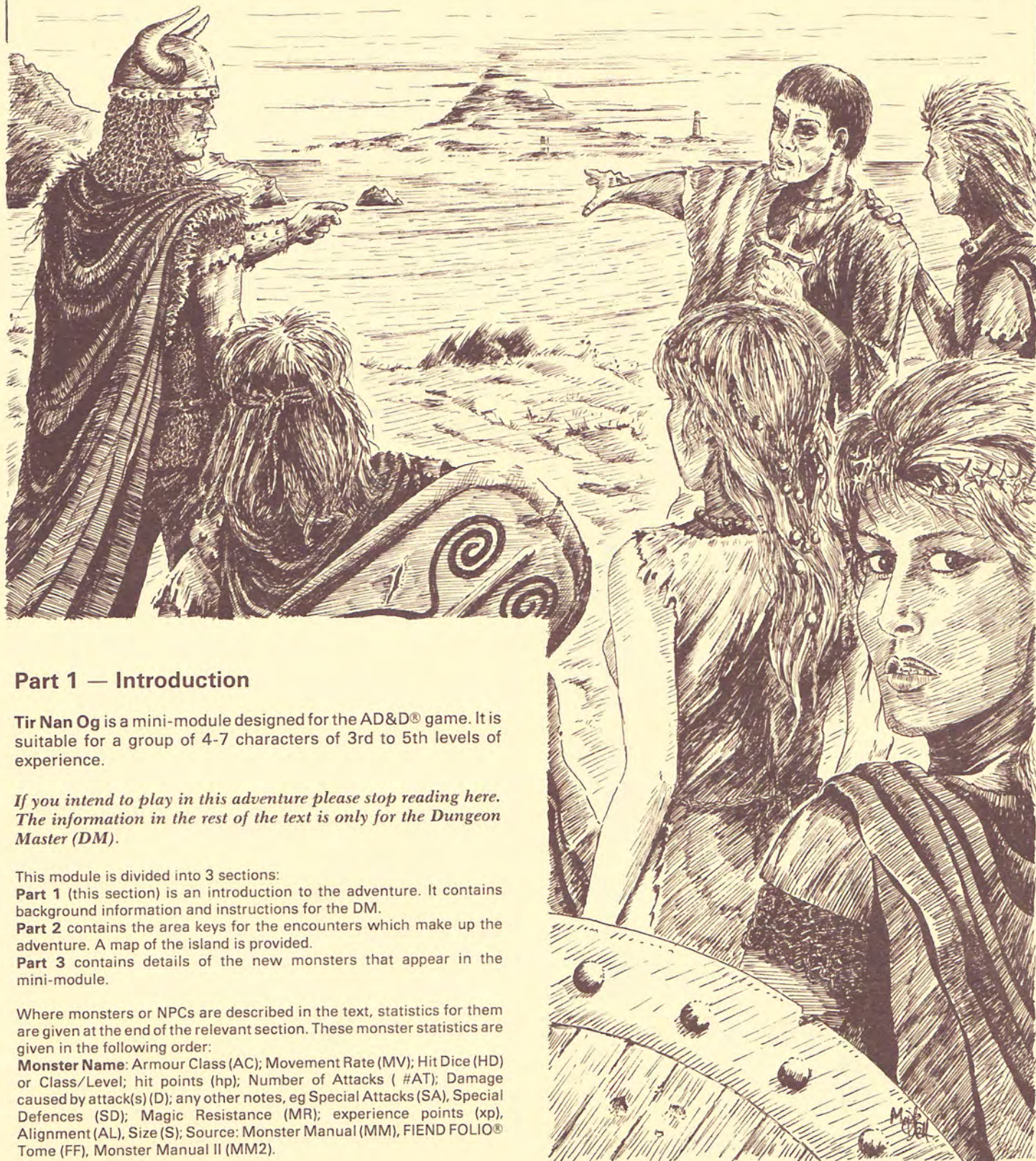
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TIR NAN OG

A mini-module for the AD&D® game,
suitable for 4-7 characters of levels 3 to 5

by Chris Barlow



Part 1 — Introduction

Tir Nan Og is a mini-module designed for the AD&D® game. It is suitable for a group of 4-7 characters of 3rd to 5th levels of experience.

If you intend to play in this adventure please stop reading here. The information in the rest of the text is only for the Dungeon Master (DM).

This module is divided into 3 sections:

Part 1 (this section) is an introduction to the adventure. It contains background information and instructions for the DM.

Part 2 contains the area keys for the encounters which make up the adventure. A map of the island is provided.

Part 3 contains details of the new monsters that appear in the mini-module.

Where monsters or NPCs are described in the text, statistics for them are given at the end of the relevant section. These monster statistics are given in the following order:

Monster Name: Armour Class (AC); Movement Rate (MV); Hit Dice (HD) or Class/Level; hit points (hp); Number of Attacks (#AT); Damage caused by attack(s) (D); any other notes, eg Special Attacks (SA), Special Defences (SD); Magic Resistance (MR); experience points (xp), Alignment (AL), Size (S); Source: Monster Manual (MM), FIEND FOLIO® Tome (FF), Monster Manual II (MM2).

The setting for this scenario comes from the stories about 'Phantom Islands', particularly those in Irish legend known as Tir Nan Og — islands said to exist beneath the waters of a number of Irish lakes and bays, appearing, at times, above their waters.

Because of the nature of this background, the adventure works best if the encounters in Part 2 occur in the order given. This is partly due to the Irish/Celtic idea of predestination which lies beneath much of that folklore.

Player's Background

The DM should set this scenario in a fairly remote area of his or her campaign, where most folk make a living by fishing or farming. Local folk-tales, especially about the 'little people' or 'Faeries' will be common — and a good way of spending an evening in good company with good drink. Sooner or later the characters will run into a local who knows the following tale, in part or in whole:

Listen now to the Tale of Tir Nan Og, for this is not an old wives' tale, to scare the children at night.

For the better part of 300 years has this tale been told, for it was then that the island dwelt above the waves and was a sweet place of good grazing and rich farms. My great grandfather's great grandfather was but a babe-in-arms when all this began.

One evening in late summer, as the days grew warmer and the wheat ripened in the fields, a messenger from Tir Nan Og came to this very town. He had paddled his small boat across the channel to tell us that the little people had come into his village. The Faeries had offered the villagers the chance to live with them below the hills — and there was room for all in the Faerie Halls. Some began to leave for Tir Nan Og, to live with the Faeries. Then Father Patrick spoke, denouncing the Faeries and all their works as unholy. 'Unless those villagers come to me in repentance and beg forgiveness' he said, 'the island shall be cursed forevermore'. At this, the townsfolk turned their backs on the messenger from Tir Nan Og.

The next morning the townsfolk went down to the shore and watched as Father Patrick pronounced his curse. No villagers came from Tir Nan Og, and at midday a mist blew in from the sea. When the mist passed the island had vanished.

It was more than fifty years before the island was seen again. Three times bells rang beneath the waters of the bay, and then the island appeared out of the mists. The brave and the curious rowed across to Tir Nan Og — though none of the townsfolk would go, the older ones remembering the curse. Those that returned would speak of nothing amiss, those that didn't doubtless perished — for the mist came quickly and the island vanished once more, taking all still ashore and the boats in the harbour. Always the island has stayed for two days and nights, once for nearly three days, yet with the coming of the mist it has vanished as though it had never been. Now the island lies beneath the waves, a punishment for the doings of the islanders.

I myself gazed upon Tir Nan Og when I was young. The boats still lay in the bay, and the lighthouse still warned of the rocks before it. I did not set foot upon it though, it is a place for them that's cursed.

Once the adventurers have been told the story of Tir Nan Og, perhaps interspersed with other tales of the 'Little People' the course of play can proceed to **The Appearance of the Isle**.

Dungeon Master's Background

Three hundred years ago the wizard Fintan discovered the existence of a group of Faeries upon the island of Tir Nan Og. He saw in them a way of obtaining eternal youth.

In the years before the island disappeared, Fintan visited the Faerie Folk hoping to learn the secret that he desired. Although he learnt much of the other magic arts, the secret of eternal youth eluded him. At last the now proud and powerful mage humbled himself and asked the Faeries if he could live with them in their kingdom, where time did not exist.

Having grown fond of the wizard, the Faeries agreed. They also invited the other inhabitants of the island — and any mainland dwellers who

wanted to come as well — to live beneath the hills with them. However, all had to decide by the following day.

Everyone in the village agreed to the Faeries' offer, except for a druid, Gwydd. His objections were so strong that Fintan chained him to a pillar and set guards about him — intending to release the druid when he had changed his mind. When the messenger returned with word of Patrick's curse Fintan grew angry, and spoke of killing the priest. This act the Faeries disallowed, whereupon Fintan took one of their number hostage so as to have his way. Unfortunately for him, while all he knew had been taught to him by the Faeries, they had not taught him everything that they knew. Fintan found himself locked within his tower, cursed to remain there.

Midday came and Patrick placed his curse upon the island. The island sank beneath the waves which bothered no one, save Gwydd the druid who was still chained to the pillar, and Fintan who waited for somebody to release him from his tower. The villagers had joined the Faeries in their realm that very night.

When Patrick uttered his curse he could not have realised that the island would still be appearing above the waves centuries later. The wording of his curse was such that the island would reappear at times to give repentant islanders a chance to leave. No-one has so far done so, being perfectly content living with the Faeries.

The Appearance of the Isle

Afew nights after the adventurers have arrived in the town, bells will be heard ringing beneath the waters of the bay. Sometime after they have heard the Tir Nan Og folk-tale the bells will be heard again. After another four days the bells will be heard ringing a third time, this time much closer to the shore.

Towards noon on the following day the local fishermen will gather in their nets and stand on the shore with a growing crowd of townsfolk. Shortly after noon a mist will be seen to gather offshore, and the island of Tir Nan Og will rise from the sea. The town priest will then curse the island in a symbolic, ritual manner, then the crowd will drift away — the young gazing at the island a little longer than the old.

Additional Notes for the Dungeon Master

1. In Irish folklore, Tir Nan Og means 'Country of Youth'.
2. Should anyone be at sea when the island rises there is a 2% chance that it will rise beneath them. In the event of the island rising beneath the adventurers the DM should determine at what point they come to rest.
3. Since the villagers joined the Faeries and the island sank beneath the waves Tir Nan Og has achieved a timeless quality, which persists even when the island is above the water. Any time spent upon the island or near its coast passes far more slowly than it would upon the mainland and consequently far more can be achieved in a single 'day'. Treat every day spent upon the island as the equivalent of three 'normal' days. The effects of the air, scent and feel of Tir Nan Og will cause 50% of all lost hit points to be restored, until the wounded character leaves the island. Adventurers should not be told of either effect of the island until they specifically ask about them, in which case they should be told that the sun is higher in the sky than it ought to be, or that they feel unusually healthy.
4. The major rivers marked upon the map are deep enough to take a small boat. The adventurers will have no difficulty in buying a boat, but no townspeople will be willing to rent a boat of any kind, in case it isn't brought back. The DM should allow the adventurers to reach an agreement whereby the seller will buy the boat back at the end of the adventure — at a reduced price, of course.
5. If the adventurers have the means and explore beneath the waves, they will find no trace of the island before it rises. Once it has risen they will find no caves, underwater tunnels or other distinguishing features around its coastline.
6. Maps of the island are available from the townsfolk. They are prepared from old maps of Tir Nan Og when the bells are first heard to ring in the hopes of selling them to adventurers. Being based on copies of copies of maps of the island, they are none too accurate. The DM should prepare a sketch map of the island for the party, excluding the encounter keys and as much detail as seems fair.

Part 2 — The Area Keys

Description of the Island

Seen from offshore, Tir Nan Og looks to be a rugged island, densely wooded with rocky outcrops. At the eastern end the island rises steeply from the sea then gradually slopes westwards towards sea level. From the landward side of the island two buildings can be seen — a lighthouse and a three storey, blackened stone tower. In the bay the upper masts and hull timbers of three wrecked ships can be seen above the surface.

Tradition on the mainland maintains that the light still burns in the lighthouse during the nights the island is above water — a lure for the unwary who seek the heathen Faeries. The blackened tower is reputed to have been the home of the wizard Fintan.

A. The Beaches

There are two beaches upon which it looks possible to land a boat (marked **A1** and **A2** on the map). The first beach is mostly red tinted sand, and covered in low green plants with spidery tendrils. Despite their sinister appearance they are harmless.

The second beach is silvery sand, and free of all plant life. On the landward side of the beach — facing inland — is a sign bearing the word 'DANGER' in common. There are pools of quicksand dotted around the beach. The exact location of these pools varies with the state of the tides, but there is a 30% chance of falling into one when crossing the sands. The DM should modify this percentage if precautions are taken. The sand has a tendency to shift, and even a route someone has just walked on may open beneath the next person to pass over it, so the chance of falling into a pool will never be less than 10%. Those falling in will sink in 1-4 melee rounds, and suffocate in a further 2-8 melee rounds. Once a character has fallen in he or she will require aid to escape. Over the years many people have ignored the sign. Their bodies occasionally 'float' to the surface of the sand, and up to four skeletal bodies may be found, still with 10-120gp in personal possessions, jewellery and coins.

The sand becomes solid 100 feet from the high water mark.

B. The Rocks

Rocks covered in barnacles and seaweed form a natural breakwater at the mouth of the bay, making it a sheltered anchorage, and it is upon these rocks that the lighthouse stands. The most practical way of reaching the lighthouse is by boat, and a set of steps from the lighthouse down to the water are visible, although they are overgrown by algae and seaweed. A very rough path, little more than an odd foothold carved into the rocks, leads from the lighthouse along the rocks to the island proper.

A casual search of the rocks will reveal three green urchins, who will attack if disturbed in any way. Each contains a gem worth 40-400gp.

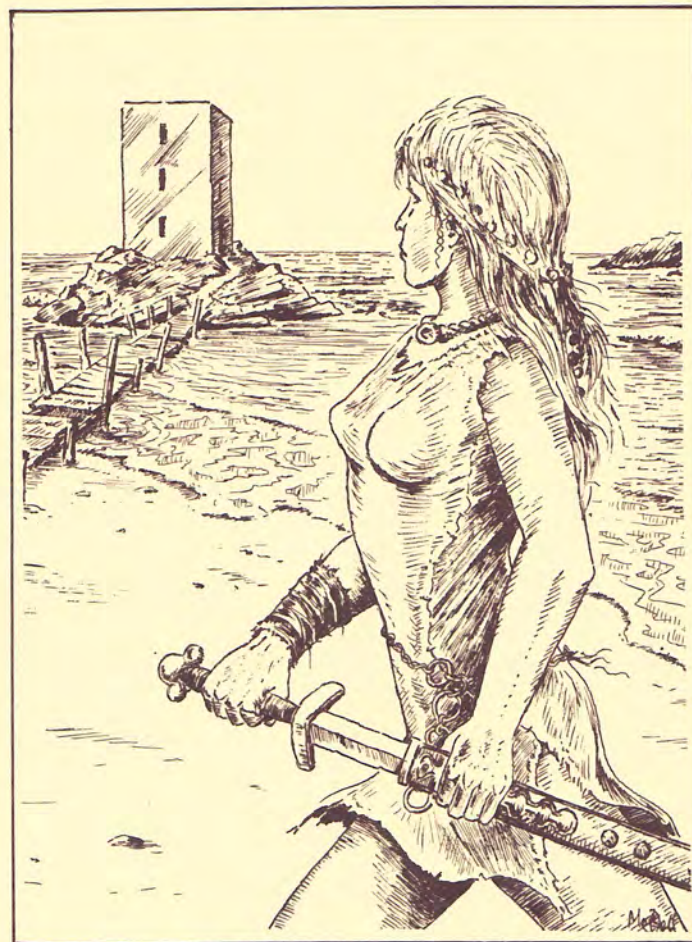
Three green urchins: AC 3; MV 9"/18"; HD 2+1; hp 13 each; #AT 2; D 2-7/2-7; SA attacks as a **light crossbow +2**; xp 89 each; AL N; S S (3' diameter); FF.

C. The Lighthouse

The lighthouse, made of whitened stone, stands some 60 feet high on the highest of the rocks. From the lamp room at the top of the lighthouse a light can be seen glowing, though it is far more noticeable at night. Despite the presence of the light the door at the base of the lighthouse, wood with an iron frame, is fused shut. The door can be broken down.

Like the other human buildings on the island — with the exception of Fintan's tower — the lighthouse was abandoned when the villagers decided to live with the Faeries. However, the lighthouse gained a new occupant when the island rose above the waters for the first time. A will o' the wisp, who had lived in the saltmarsh, moved to the lighthouse — it is a better place to use in order to lure victims to their deaths. The will o' the wisp will attack if the lighthouse is entered.

The lighthouse has three floors in addition to the lamp room. From the bottom (entrance) level these are: a well-stocked kitchen including food and drink that is still edible; a bedroom/cabin with cupboards full of clothes and a sea chest containing a pair of **boots of water walking** (the functional equivalent of a **ring of water walking**); and a comfortably furnished study, containing a variety of half-drawn charts, navigational aids and calligraphy instruments.



Will o' the wisp: AC -8; MV 18"; HD 9; hp 42; #AT 1; D 2-16; SD immune to spells except protection from evil, magic missile, maze; xp 1704; AL CE; S S; MM.

D. The Bay

The calm waters of the bay appear to be a natural anchorage, spoilt only by the wreckage of three ships that shows above the water. There are no signs of life.

The three wrecks may be entered at low tide, but their timbers are rotten and anyone moving about within them has a 10% chance of falling through the woodwork deeper into the hulks, taking 1-6 points of damage. It is up to the DM to decide if there is any chance of drowning in these circumstances.

E. Fintan's Tower

The wizard's blackened tower stands upon a barren rock in the waters of the bay. An old, partially rotted (but still secure) wooden bridge connects the rock with the island. The tower itself is 20 feet square and 30 feet high, and is made of ageing metal, streaked with the accumulations of 300 years of neglect. The only windows are small arrow-slits — three on each side of the tower. Anyone observing the tower may notice a figure wandering from arrow-slit to arrow-slit. This is Fintan the wizard, and there is a 75% chance that he will notice characters outside his tower and attempt to attract their attention by waving to them.

If the party crosses the bridge to the tower they will notice the following verse burnt into a rock near the end of the bridge:

Leave this tower, turn to dust
Lest the huntsman's whitened axe
Has cut the silver chain in two
Upon the sunlit diamond rock.

Fintan was trapped within his tower — actually a **Daern's Instant Fortress** — by the Faeries before Tir Nan Og sank beneath the waves. Once Fintan can address the party he will warn them against going near the lighthouse, although he doesn't know the nature of the light.

Fintan wishes only to be released from his tower, and will beg the party for aid. He will not leave, because of the verse, and he will explain that he was placed here by the Faeries because he tried to save the isle from being damned — a truthful, but misleading, version of events. Fintan knows little about the meaning of the verse, but he suspects that the chain is the one used to secure Gwydd the druid. He will not divulge who chained the druid in the first place. He will offer the party all he has — including the tower — if they lift the curse that binds him to this place.

While the Faeries' curse remains in effect it is impossible to enter the tower, or use its command word.

The chain referred to in the verse does indeed bind the druid (encounter area I), whilst the axe and the diamond rock belong to a giant (encounter area L) and a group of lava children (encounter area M).

If the adventurers succeed in lifting the curse they will see Fintan leave his tower with only the clothes he wears and head towards the Faerie Hill (encounter area N), or they will return to the tower and find him gone, leaving the door ajar.

Inside, the tower has only three rooms (one to each floor), and all are very musty. Despite Fintan's promise to give the party all he has, there is little treasure — a result of Fintan studying Faerie magic. A search will reveal **potions of fire resistance, healing and levitation** (one dose of each), six jewelled goblets (worth 50gp each, or 400gp as a set), a small wooden box containing 103pp, a piece of parchment with the word '*Mandragora*' written upon it (the command word for this **Daern's Instant Fortress**) and Fintan's spell books. In addition to those spells which Fintan has memorised, the books also contain the spells **detect magic, read magic, write, detect evil, fools gold, water breathing, extension I and wizard eye**.

Fintan: AC 4; MV 12"; Mu 7; hp 19; #AT 1; D dagger (1-4); SA spells — **burning hands, friends, sleep, unseen servant, forget, invisibility, stinking cloud, lightning bolt, phantasmal force, polymorph self**; xp 1015; AL CN; S M.

Fintan wears **bracers of defence AC 4**, and carries a **dagger +1**.

F. The Marsh

Once the home of the will o' the wisp, the marsh's only inhabitant is a water weird, who will attempt to pull to their death anyone getting too close. Once pulled into the water, the natural suction of the marsh will act to pull anyone under within 3-5 melee rounds. A total strength of 22 is required to pull a victim free (using a rope or similar).

Water weird: AC 4; MV 12"; HD3+3; hp 12; AT 0; D nil; SA drowning; SD limited damage from edged weapons and fire-based spells, slowed by cold spells, disrupted if brought to 0 hp, killed by **purify water**; xp 418; AL CE; S L; MM.



G. The Woodsman's Cottage

During Tir Nan Og's last appearance above the water a pair of wolfweres and their attendant wolf pack swam to the isle in search of food, only to be trapped when it sank beneath the waves once more. With no way of leaving the isle the wolfweres took up residence in an abandoned cottage — previously the home of the village woodcutter and his wife. There are now four wolfweres, a son and a daughter having been born during the years on the isle. They live in the cottage as a human woodsman/farmer and his family.

The two children may be found in the woods playing and collecting firewood at G1 and/or G2 — the adventurers' first knowledge of them will be the sound of cheerful singing some distance away. If approached the children (aged 9 and 7) will be curious in a friendly way. They will be quite happy to take any visitors 'to meet Mummy and Daddy (for tea!)' and will lead the way through the woods singing and skipping, stopping to gather firewood. Any help to carry the firewood will be welcomed.

The cottage is set in a small garden, with a field and grazing enclosure (in which is a herd of sheep) attached.

The cottage has four rooms. The kitchen, in which the adult female will be cooking dinner, is a simple room with a work bench and cooking range. She will defend herself if attacked with one of the meat cleavers or other cooking utensil. The main living room contains a table and four chairs against one wall, two larger chairs, two wooden stools and a chest of drawers — in one of its drawers is a **longsword +1**. Firewood and a woodcutter's white axe stand near the fireplace. One bedroom is used by the adults and contains a double bed and a cupboard for clothes. The other bedroom is used by the children and has two single beds and a pair of smaller cupboards.

The children's room has a small cage in one corner which contains four white mice and a small bowl of cereals stands next to it. If the cage is opened and the mice allowed to get out, then they will become 4 giant white weremice, who will not attack anybody who fed them.

The room also contains a number of toys, among which are a number with magical properties. These have been made by the giant (see Area L) in return for work carried out by the wolfweres since they were trapped upon the island. These magic items are:

- * A rocking horse, which will carry a small person and move at up to 12", providing the rider grasps both the reins. The maximum weight the horse can carry is roughly equal to a dwarf in chainmail or a small human in leather.
- * A playpen made of a wood-like material, roughly 4 feet square with 3-foot-high railings, with a gate in one side. Once shut, the gate can only be opened from the inside by a strength of 19. Anyone of lesser strength placed inside the playpen will be restrained — the equivalent of a **hold person** spell — and be unable to leave the pen. As a safety precaution (to prevent children being trapped if something happens to their parents) the gate opens of its own accord after 24 hours. It can also be opened by a **dispel magic** spell.
- * A cloth book with simple words in large print underneath coloured pictures — a man, a goblin, a centaur — one picture to a page. The book is so simple that anyone trying to read it will lose 1 point of Intelligence permanently, but gain 500xp.
- * A dummy which cannot be taken out of the mouth once put in unless a command phrase ('speak, child') is spoken. The dummy inhibits all speech, and may (50%) cause torpor in its victim.
- * A rattle consisting of three red balls in a white frame. The red balls can be removed and hurled up to 7", bursting at the end of their trajectory into a 3 dice magical **fireball** (cf **necklace of fireballs**). If the rattle is banged hard against a solid surface, a saving throw vs crushing blow must be made for each ball (treat as the equivalent of soft metal), failure indicating that the ball has burst into flame.

The wolfweres will sell their (ordinary) axe if asked, and know the location of the skeleton, black pillar and silver chain (area I). The wolfweres also know that the giant possesses a white axe, but they would much sooner sell their axe to the adventurers.

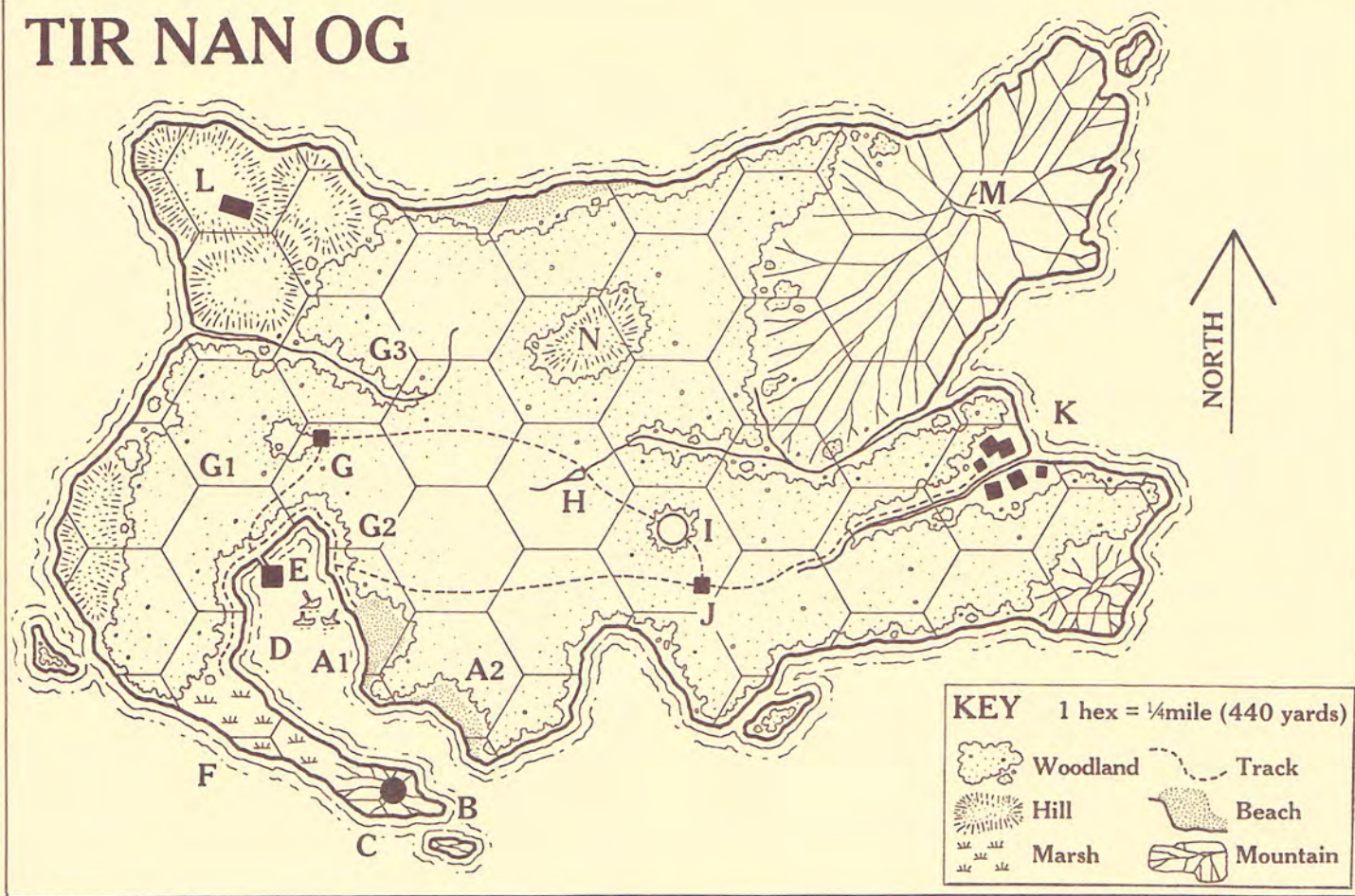
The adult male will be willing to lead the way to the skeleton and pillar if one of the party remains at the cottage. He will go no further than the ford (area H). The wolfweres will not go with the adventurers as a group 'because of the childrens' bedtime'.

If overtly threatened or attacked, the wolfweres can call upon the pack of twelve wolves that came with them to the island. These now live at G3, and will arrive 5-8 melee rounds after being called.

2 adult wolfweres: AC 3; MV 15"; HD 5+1, hp 28, 21; #AT 1 or 2; D 2-12 plus possible weapon; SA Singing causes lethargy; SD cold-wrought iron or +1 weapons to hit; MR 10%; AL CE; S M; xp 718, 676; MM2.

2 wolfwere children: AC 3; MV 15"; HD 2+2, hp 11, 7; #AT 1; D 2-8; SA Singing causes lethargy; SD cold-wrought iron or +1 weapons to hit; MR 10%; AL CE; S S; xp 193, 181.

TIR NAN OG



4 weremice: AC 6; HD 2; hp 7 each; #AT 1; D 1-4; SA Bite may cause lycanthropy; SD Needs silver or magical weapons to hit; AL N; S S; xp 79 each; Special monster — cf other lycanthropes MM, FF, MM2.

12 wolves: AC 7; MV 18"; HD 2+2; hp 10 each; #AT 1; D 2-5; AL N; S S; xp 65 each; MM.

H. The Ford and the Lake

At this point the stream is blocked by a dam of green weed reinforced with fallen logs, thus forming a ford on the downstream side of the dam and a small lake upstream. The lake is some 18 feet deep at its deepest point. The water falls fairly slowly over the top of the dam and at the ford is about 8 inches deep. The waters then gradually reform into a river once more. On the other side of the river (no matter which direction the party approach from) a young horse is grazing.

The horse is actually an aughisky (*agh-iski*), a dangerous water fairy which haunts rivers and streams. It will allow any unsuspecting character to mount, and while it is being ridden inland it is quite safe. However, the slightest smell or sight of seawater will send the aughisky dashing into water where it will throw off its rider and tear him or her to pieces.

1 aughisky: AC 3; MV 18"; HD 6+4; hp 32; #AT 1; D 4-16; SA Drowning; SD Limited immunity to weapons and spells; xp 906; AL CE; S L; New monster - see Part 3.

I. The Black Pillars

This forest clearing is about 180 feet in diameter. Its centre is a blackened and lifeless circle, some 120 feet in diameter, ringed with yellowed and dying vegetation. If the perimeter is searched the path from the ford will be found to continue on the far side. This path leads to what was the druid's residence (area J).

Within the black circle stand five black 9-foot-high stone pillars. Four stand at the cardinal points of the compass on the edge of the blackened circle, the fifth is in the centre of the clearing — and a skeleton is chained to it with silver bonds.

The black circle was created by Fintan — this is the spot where he chained Gwydd the druid. As a further cruelty, Fintan caused the area within the bounds of the pillars to be deadly to all plant life, knowing that this would hurt Gwydd immensely. Should any member of the party **speak with plants** then the nature of the circle and the details of how the druid was imprisoned by a robed figure will be discovered.

Any magic user who goes within 10 feet of the edge of the circle must make a saving throw vs Spells or succumb to the hatred of the dead druid. A magic user who fails the saving throw will cease whatever he or she was doing, and walk slowly into the circle towards the skeleton chained to the central pillar.

Anybody entering the blackened circle will cause the four black outer pillars to reveal their true nature as four caryatid columns. These entities will subsequently attack anyone within the circle. They will return to their former positions and resume the shape of black pillars should the person who caused them to become active die or depart from the circle.

The skeleton is bound to the pillar by a silver chain (value - 400gp) and wears a wooden crown (worthless) and a pendant in the shape of a small gold sickle (value - 150gp) around its neck. Hanging from the pillar above the skeleton is a sheet of corroded lead, on which the words 'Annoy me no more, Druid...' can still be made out. The skeleton will writhe within its bonds as though trying to escape whenever anyone comes within 5 feet of it.

Should anyone touch the skeleton, it will crumble to dust with an audible sigh — the wooden crown and golden pendant will fall to the ground. In the skeleton's place will stand a rotting corpse — a revenant — which will stride from the circle in a purposeful manner towards the Fintan's tower (area E). It will attack anybody who tries to prevent it going in search of Fintan.

4 caryatid columns: AC 5; MV 6"; HD attacks as a 5HD monster; hp 22 each; #AT 1; D 2-8; SD weapons that hit may snap; MR +4 on all saving throws; xp 280 each; AL N; S M; FF.

1 revenant: AC 10; MV 9"; HD 8; hp 31; #AT 1; D 2-16; SA Paralyzation; SD cannot be turned, immune to damage from weapons, regeneration, spell immunity as other undead; xp 1585; AL N; S M; FF.

J. The Druid's Residence

This small stone building has only two rooms and stands next to Gwydd the druid's herb garden and a grove of trees. Both rooms — a study and a bedroom — are simply furnished, as Gwydd spent much of his time outside and ate only what he could find in the woods around. However, a search will reveal a **scimitar +2** hanging in a scabbard on the study wall.

The druid's remaining treasure was hidden in the grove, beneath the roots of an apple tree and guarded by a birch tree spirit that Gwydd had bound to his service. Hidden beneath the apple tree are a (rather mildewed) wooden **helm of underwater action**, a golden sickle (worth 250gp), a leather bag containing a small diamond (250gp), 3 rubies (300 gp each) and a pair of uncut emeralds (worth 200gp to a jeweller) and a small iron chest (without a lock) containing a mixture of copper, silver and gold coins worth 153gp.

The herb garden is somewhat overgrown, but a druid will be able to find material components for the casting of most spells. Behind the garden is Gwydd's sacred pool, a supernaturally tranquil spot. Anyone failing a saving throw vs Death Magic will not voluntarily leave the area of the pool, even to the point of remaining in the face of starvation. A saving throw against the tranquility of the spot should be made each hour.

1 birch tree spirit: AC 1 or 7; MV 3"; HD 5+1; hp 27; #AT 1; D 1; SA Insanity; SD Spell and weapon immunity; xp 627; AL N(E); S M; New monster - see Part 3.

K. The Village

On the eastern end of the island is a spotlessly clean village of thirty buildings. When examined, all the buildings appear to be still occupied, although they are not. The villagers abandoned their houses with great speed, taking only what they could carry, and as a consequence the village looks much as it did before they left to live with the faeries. On average some 30gp worth of small valuables and coins can be found in each of the houses.

There are two noteworthy buildings in the village. One is the village inn, 'The Grey Partridge Inn', which is still well stocked with ales and wines. The other is an oblong temple in the centre of the village.

The temple is closed and locked (normal percentage chance of success for a thief to pick the lock), and there are no markings on the door to indicate to which deity it is dedicated. Examination of any of the stained glass will reveal that a partridge is prominent upon each window. Inside the temple contains benches and a small altar behind which is an alabaster statue of a partridge (a bird considered holy by the islanders). Should anyone damage or desecrate the temple this statue will begin to grow (up to a maximum of 7 feet tall). If the desecration continues the statue will change into a giant partridge and attack the offenders, reverting back to its statue-state once the offenders are dealt with. The statue is similar to a **figurine of wondrous power**, but it cannot be removed from the temple in its statue form (moving the statue counts as an act of desecration), and if it is forced to leave the temple in partridge form it will crumble to alabaster dust.

1 giant partridge: AC 7; MV 3"/24"; HD 4; hp 20; #AT 3; D 1-3/1-3/2-8; 140xp; AL N; S M.

L. The Giant's Mansion

In the north-west corner of the island, hidden among the hills, dwells Faidrag, a hill giant. He was once renowned for the boastful challenges and his partiality to roast lamb. The giant will come out of his mansion to greet any visitors and will issue a challenge to single combat to any fighters — to the drawing of first blood only. Should the offer be accepted, he will prepare a meal for the party prior to the fight. In combat, Faidrag uses an **axe +3** (the equivalent of a two-handed for man-sized creatures) made of bone, bleached white in the sun. This is the huntsman's axe that the party require to free Fintan.

If the challenge is refused, Faidrag will taunt the party. If attacked he will blow a whistle which hangs at his neck and summon his four wolfhounds. He will then retreat into his mansion because he prefers his battles to be single combat.

He doesn't know where the villagers are, but he is quite happy because the supply of mutton has been plentiful since their departure.

The giant's mansion has five rooms:

1. The entrance is a long hall, hung with a variety of animal pelts and other hunting trophies. Above each of the four doors that lead from the hall is a stuffed head — a bear, a wolf, an stag and a badger. The various pelts (there are 17 in all) are worth 20-40gp.

2. This is a comfortably furnished bedroom with a large four poster bed, two chairs, a bench, a wardrobe and a large number of sheepskin rugs (27 in total, worth 1-6gp each).

The bench is an illusion which hides the fact that it is actually a locked stone coffer. The lock has a poison needle in it, which will be activated by a failed attempt to pick the lock. Inside are seven leather bags which are themselves trapped. A wire is held in place by the bags, and if it is released a blade will scythe across the top of the coffer. This will sever any limb within the coffer, unless the affected character rolls his or her Dexterity or less on a d20. Each of the bags holds 250gp in mixed coins.

3. This is a kitchen — bones and other evidence of the wolfhounds can be seen scattered about the floor. One side of a large sheep roasts over an open fire in the kitchen's centre.

4. This study/workroom is nearly filled by a workbench, a reading table, a large armchair. The walls are lined with bookshelves. Faidrag's tools — chisels, saws, paintbrushes etc — are scattered across the benchtop. The bookshelves contain some 200 books on a wide variety of subjects, including carpentry, hunting, mythology and heraldry. Each book is about the size of a magic user's spell book, and worth 5-20gp to a sage.

5. The main chamber is long with a high, oak-beamed ceiling. A log fire burns in a central hearth, flanked by tables and benches. At one end stands a high table and two chairs. The walls are hung with animal pelts.

Behind a particularly fine bear pelt (worth 150gp) is a suit of **platemail +1** (giant sized). The peg upon which the bearskin hangs is trapped. If the weight of the bearskin is taken from the peg, 5 spikes (treat as crossbow bolts fired by a 2nd level fighter) will be released from the opposite wall.

Faidrag, the hill giant: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 8+1; hp 39; #AT 1; D 2-16 or by weapon; SA Faidrag will not hurl rocks; SD innate ability to cast **enchant an item** on small objects; xp 1668; AL CE(N); S L; MM - non-standard example of monster.

4 wolfhounds: AC 6; MV 12"; HD 2+2; hp 13 each; #AT 1; D 2-8; SD Totally loyal, immune to charm etc; xp 89 each; AL N; S S; MM - cf dog, war.

M. The Northern Mountains

The few mountains on the island — at the northernmost end — are of a reddish, crystalline stone and pitted with caves. A permanent misty haze hangs above them. Rising to a height of 300 feet, they present no hazards for careful climbers, although any attempt to climb would have to be started from a boat (throw Dexterity or less on d20 to avoid falling into the sea). Approaching from landward requires hard walking which gradually turns into a steep scramble, but this offers no real difficulty.

Investigation of the caves will reveal that a current of warm air rises from one of them. Further investigation will reveal a tunnel which descends to a roughly oblong cavern, some 17 feet high, 80 feet wide and 230 feet long. The floor is a layer of molten lava roughly 5 feet deep. Towards the back of the cavern a golden pillar stands in the lava and reaches to within 2 feet of the cavern roof. The pillar 15 feet high (its base cannot be seen beneath the lava), and worth 4500gp. Mounted at the top of the pillar is a large diamond (value - 4000gp).

The pillar and its diamond are the property of a group of 8 lava children who believe them to be sacred. They also believe that should the diamond be removed from its mount for more than an hour, their home — a volcano — will explode. Consequently, they will not let anybody take it away — and will explain why. If paid, fooled or persuaded, they will temporarily remove the diamond from the pillar and let the party use it — but one of the lava children will keep hold of the diamond at all times.

If the diamond is not replaced within the hour, the lava children's belief will be proved true. The mountain will explode, and the island will sink back beneath the waves. (See **The Sinking of the Isle**).

7 lava children: AC 4; MV 9"; HD 4; hp 17 each; #AT 3; D 1-6/1-6/2-12; SD 'immune' to metal; xp 218 each; AL N; S M; FF.

1 lava child (magic user): AC 4; MV 9"; HD 5; hp 22 each; #AT 3; D 1-6/1-6/2-12; SA spells; SD 'immune' to metal; xp 315; AL N; S M; FF.

N. The Faerie Hill

The Faeries of Tir Nan Og dwell in halls beneath one of the island's hills. If the adventurers manage to lift the curse placed upon Fintan by the faeries — and the revenant does not manage to kill him — they may see him leave his tower and make towards the faerie hill.

Although the entrance to the faerie halls only becomes generally visible by moonlight, it may be found by walking round the base of the hill 13 times in an anti-clockwise direction. It will then appear as a stone doorway let into the southern side of the hill. Fintan will, given the opportunity, walk — almost jog — around the hill, and then go into the faerie halls. If the revenant has not already caught him, it will do the same. Should the adventurers not see the method of finding the entrance, a ranger will have no trouble in following the tracks as they circle the hill.

Anyone standing on the hill will be able to hear faint sounds of merriment from below — actually listening at ground level will make the sounds louder, but no clearer.

The entrance to the faerie halls will appear when night falls — and warm, inviting lights will be seen behind the door. The sounds of revelry will be much clearer. Should the adventurers attempt to enter the halls, they will be made welcome — as mainlanders who have finally accepted the faeries' original invitation.

Any adventurers who accept this offer are effectively trapped within the faerie halls. Time does not run concurrently beneath the hill, and any time spent there is the equivalent of 100-300 years. Any character who leaves the faeries has this time added to his current age. As a result, the DM may care to warn the players of possible drawbacks to taking up the faeries' offer. Providing the halls are never left, all will be well, and the character's may continue to live normally — endlessly enjoying the hospitality of the faerie folk.

If the adventurers are foolish enough to attack the faeries, they will be fought by the entire population beneath the hill — including Fintan (should he still be alive) and the 200 or so villagers (see DMG p88, Typical Inhabitants).

30 faeries: AC 5; MV 18"; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; D by weapon type; SA Spells, +1 weaponry; SD Limited weapon and spell immunity; MR 5%; xp 97 each; S S; New monster - see Part 3.

1 faerie knight: AC 4; MV 18"; HD 2; hp 11; #AT 1; D by weapon type; SA Spells, +2 weaponry; SD Limited weapon and spell immunity; MR 5%; xp 156 each; S S; New monster - see Part 3.

1 faerie marchioness: AC 3; MV 18"; HD 3; hp 16; #AT 1; D by weapon type; SA Spells, +3 weaponry; SD Limited weapon and spell immunity; MR 5%; xp 238; S S; New monster - see Part 3.

The Sinking of the Isle

After spending 1d12+36 hours above the waves, Tir Nan Og will once more vanish into the depths.

Before it does so, however, the mist will begin to gather, firstly at the water's edge and then spread inland. The mist will take but two turns to cover the whole island — and once it is covered it will sink. Once beneath the waves it will vanish totally — searching the bottom of the bay will not reveal its location.

Anyone caught on the island will be dragged down as it sinks. They will drown in 3 melee rounds unless they have some form of escape from the ocean's effects (eg a **helm of underwater action**, a **ring of water walking** etc) or they have taken refuge in one of the island's buildings or with the faeries. If the adventurers choose to enter one of the buildings, they will automatically fall into temporal stasis (as the spell) until the Tir Nan Og again appears above the waves — after 2d10 + 30 years.

Those who have taken refuge with the faeries will not suffer any ill-effects when the island sinks. They will, of course, be trapped beneath the faerie hill.

CREDITS

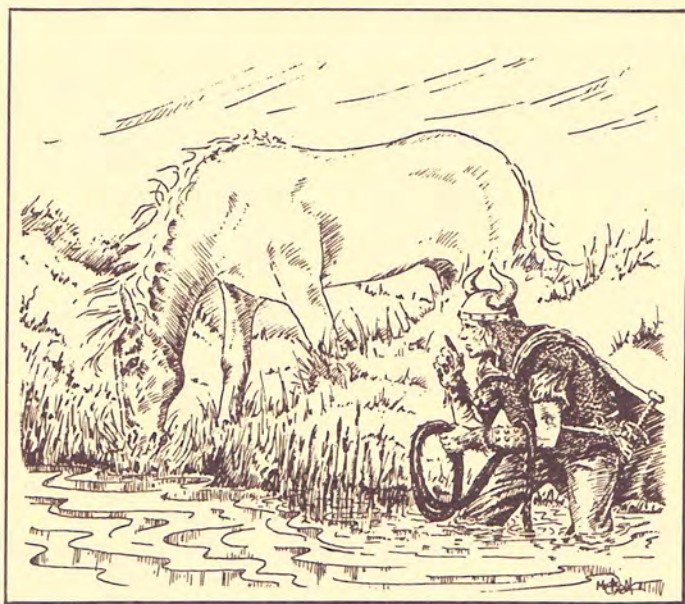
Design: **Chris Barlow**
Development: **Mike Brunton**
Art: **Mark O'Dell**
Cartography: **Paul Ruiz**

Part 3 - New monsters

All the monsters given below are unofficial.

AUGHISKY (Water-horse)

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*
NO. APPEARING: *1 or 2*
ARMOUR CLASS: *3*
MOVE: *18"*
HIT DICE: *6+4*
% IN LAIR: *Nil*
TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *1*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *4-16*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Drowning*
SPECIAL DEFENCES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
INTELLIGENCE: *Very*
ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic evil (neutral evil)*
SIZE: *L*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
Attack/Defence Modes: *Nil/nil*
LEVEL/XP VALUE: *VI/650+8 per hit point*



The Irish aughiski (pronounced *Agh-iski*), or water-horse, is a fell water faerie that appears in the guise of a handsome horse. It is usually close to a body of water of some description.

When first encountered, the aughisky appears almost eager to be ridden, and if anyone is brave — or foolhardy — enough to climb on its back, it makes a splendid mount, but it must never be allowed sight, sound or smell of the sea.

Should it catch sight of, smell or hear the sea, it will immediately rush into the water, taking its rider with it. Once in the sea, it will throw off its rider and attack in an effort to devour him or her. Anyone who is carried into the sea by the aughisky will drown in 3 melee rounds unless they can reach the surface (swimming or treading water precludes any form of attack if armour is worn).

Like many faeries, the aughisky is vulnerable only to cold iron — silver and magical weapons do no damage whatsoever. It is also immune to all mind-influencing and water-based spells, and cold-based attacks do only half damage. Fire-based attacks cause full damage.

Each Uisge and Cabyll-ushtey: The each uisge (same pronunciation) and cabyll-ushtey are, respectively, the Highland and Manx versions of the same creature. They differ only in their ferocity, as they will not wait to see, hear or smell the sea before carrying victims into the depths and attacking them. The Manx cabyll-ushtey is also rumoured to attack domestic livestock that wander near the shore.

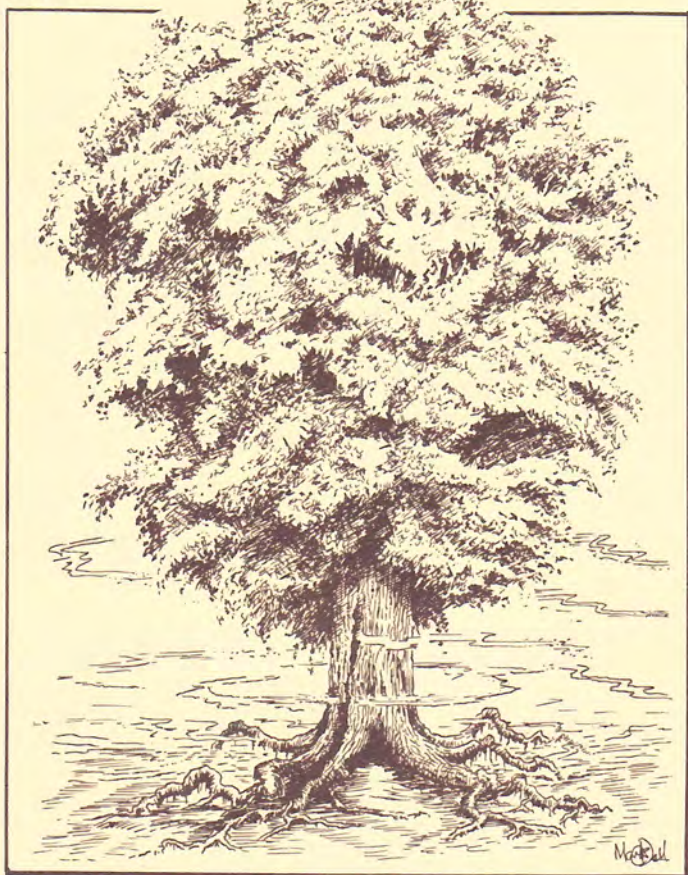
The each uisge has the ability to appear in human guise, which it occasionally does in order to 'spy out the land' before selecting a likely victim to approach in horse-form.

BIRCH TREE SPIRIT

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*
 NO. APPEARING: *1*
 ARMOUR CLASS: *1 or 7*
 MOVE: *3"*
 HIT DICE: *5+1*
 % IN LAIR: *100%*
 TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*
 NO. OF ATTACKS: *1*
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: *1 hit point*
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Insanity*
 SPECIAL DEFENCES: *Spell and weapon immunity*
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
 INTELLIGENCE: *Low*
 ALIGNMENT: *Neutral (evil)*
 SIZE: *M*
 PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
 Attack/Defence Modes: *Nil/nil*
 LEVEL/XP VALUE: *V/465+6 per hit point*

A birch tree spirit appears as an amorphous white cloud, smelling slightly of new, green wood. It attacks with a pseudopod with which it attempts to touch the forehead of a victim. A successful 'to hit' roll indicates that it has done so, and the victim must save vs Spells or become insane (see DMG p83). The victim also develops a white, leaf-shaped mark upon his or her forehead. The insanity and the mark persist until the victim receives a **remove curse** spell.

While in cloud form, a birch tree spirit cannot move more than 6" away from the wooden object/tree to which it is bound. It is immune to all spells, has an Armour Class of 1 and may only be hit by silver or magical weapons. However, it may be 'turned' by a druid. The druid is treated as an equivalent level cleric, and the birch tree spirit as the equivalent of a wraith.



If turned, it will return to the object/tree to which it is bound. It is then much more vulnerable to attack. Its Armour Class drops to 7, and it may be struck by any type of weapon. Fire-based attacks do double damage, and a **warp wood** spell will cause 1d4 points of damage per level of the caster. It remains immune to the effects of all other spells.

Birch tree spirits are bound into the service of druids or magic users specialising in plantcraft by either a **hold plant** or **charm plant** spell. It will never have any treasure of its own, only what it has been given to watch over. Because they are always guardians, they are never encountered as wandering monsters.

FAERIE



FREQUENCY: *Rare*
 NO. APPEARING: *1-100*
 ARMOUR CLASS: *Variable*
 MOVE: *18"*
 HIT DICE: *1-4+1*
 % IN LAIR: *50%*
 TREASURE TYPE: *R, S, T*
 NO. OF ATTACKS: *1*
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type*
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Spells*
 SPECIAL DEFENCES: *Spell and weapon immunity*
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: *5%*
 INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional-genius*
 ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic neutral (evil)*
 SIZE: *S (4' tall)*
 PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
 Attack/Defence Modes: *Nil/nil*
 LEVEL/XP VALUE:
 1 HD: *III/92+1 per hit point*
 2 HD: *III/134+2 per hit point*
 3 HD: *IV/190+3 per hit point*
 4 HD: *V/360+5 per hit point*

Faeries, also called the Little People or Wee Folk, are a widely divergent group of creatures. Those described here are really 'generic' faeries, having some — but not all — of the abilities that these creatures are capable of displaying.

All Faeries are natural magicians — at least the equivalent of 3rd level magic users or illusionists (these faeries have but 1 Hit Die). However, they are also natural pranksters and teasers. As a result, they will rarely use 1st level magic-user or illusionist spells, preferring instead to torment their victims with Cantrips (see IMAGINE™ magazines 8 & 9).

For every 20 faeries encountered, one will be a member of their lesser nobility (2HD), and the equivalent of a 7th level magic user or illusionist. For every 30 faeries, one will be a 10th level magic user or illusionist (3HD), and for every 50 faeries one will be a member of the greater nobility (4+1HD), and the equivalent of a 15th level magic user or illusionist. He or she will be accompanied by a retinue of 1-4 7th level magic user/illusionist equivalents.

Because of their magical abilities, faeries prefer not to fight — but can do so when forced into battle. They wear silver armour appropriate to their social station, ranging from chainmail to full suits of platemail, and use a wide variety of weapons, with combat bonuses ranging from +1 to +4.

They are invulnerable to all mind-influencing spells, and magical and silver weapons do but 1 point of damage when they hit. Iron weapons cause normal damage. Due to their sorcerous nature, faeries cannot stand the sight of clerics of good alignment, and will avoid contact with such people, even to the extent of fleeing.

Faeries are an extremely proud folk, and will remember any slur or harm done to them — and punish/torment those they consider guilty, even to death. However, they are not totally evil, merely fickle — and if need be, vengeful — to those they encounter. But they are also be generous to those who aid them. Any gifts or rewards they give will often be two edged — items which bring good fortune to the possessor providing that certain conditions are never violated, in which case the good fortune is replaced by bad fortune of equal magnitude.

Finally, faeries seem to be able to manipulate time. Visitors to faerie halls and dwellings do not age while they are there, and years may pass in the outside world. However, once a mortal leaves a faerie hall, the full burden of the years that have been spent 'outside' time is imposed — typically a period of 20-200 years, often killing the person in the process — death by simple old age.

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TURNBULL TALKING



If the solution to part 2 of my recent competition took us into murky waters, the solution to the final part takes us into obscurity only equalled by my former Manchester landlady, mistress of the multiple negative ('Aren't you not coming down for no breakfast' isn't easy to cope with at 6.30 in the morning).

The only clue is that one 'solution' has already been provided. The 'question' at the top is

or,

as we found last time, **A is true** (this will make more sense if you have part 2's answers in front of you). The second line gives us the numeral **2** on the left and the answer **not not A is true** on the right. Now **not not** is redundant, by rule 2, so the 'answer' is the same as the 'question'. In other words, the test is to express **A is true** in different ways by using the rule specified at the left of each line.

The first blank line requires rule 3, but a problem arises — with the exception of rule 2, the rules use two pieces of luggage, **A** and **B**; how do we work with only one? At least the number of spaces is given so we know how many symbols each answer requires. If we are short of a couple, two 'nots' or two brackets will help since their presence changes nothing so long as they are properly positioned.

Actually, removing **B** makes it easier rather than otherwise. Obviously **A implies A**, so using rule 2, **A implies not not A**, or

There

aren't enough symbols here, and we have so far omitted the 'truth' symbol. The solution requires eight symbols, so let's fill out with brackets

and this one wins the coconut using rule 3. The brackets are needed here anyway to distinguish between **A is true** and a statement involving **A is true**.

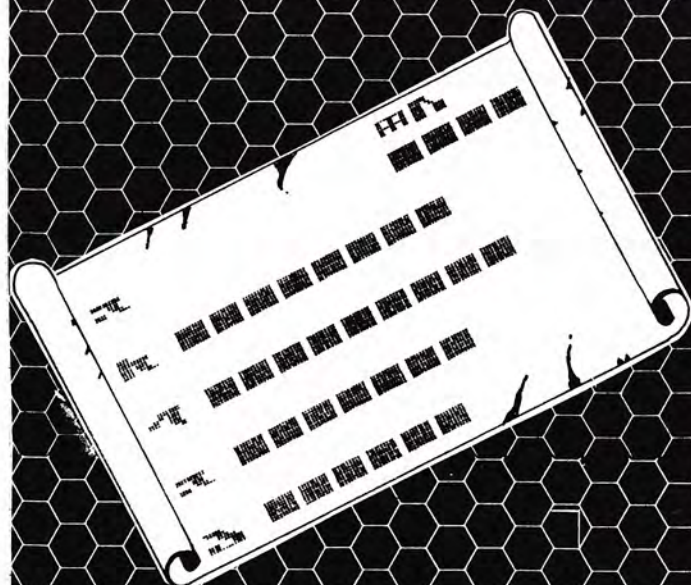
Next we need rule 5 which deals with equivalents. **A implies A** is correct, though a trifle unnecessary; two brackets round the sides gives only 5 symbols and we need 9. The answer is to use rule 2 again. Start with **not not A implies A** which, plus brackets, uses 7 symbols. Then another 'not' on each side of the implication gives **not not not A implies not A**

and the problem is solved.

Next, rule 2 again, with 7 symbols. Fairly quickly we can get to **not A implies not A** which, though spurious, is correct, so fill in

Finally, rule 7 which involves **or**, and this is a bit more tricky. Six symbols which, with brackets round the outside, leaves 4 to play with, and we must include **or** and **A**. After some fiddling, we can come up with **A or not A** or in symbols

and this is the answer which saved our hit points. It's rather like saying 'the universe' or OM.



Editor's Note: Those individuals who scanned last month's answers in the hope that they would understand what was going on may have been finally driven to despair by the answer to Question 5. It should read '(A IMPLIES B) IS EQUIVALENT TO (NOT A IMPLIES NOT B)'. The middle 'not' was superfluous.

Only two brave folk survived this far, discounting those whose answers were not complete and who no doubt, after several hours of effort, started chewing the furniture in sheer frustration.

The runner up, who got her and a bit confused (and no wonder, at 4.30am) is **Rachel Shaw** of Halifax. Rachel, you weren't entirely correct but yours was a bold effort and I'll ask the worthy IMAGINE team to come up with a reward of some sort (25,000 experience points??).

The winner, correct in every detail, who wins the free ticket to GamesFair '85, is

Steve Pearce

of Cheltenham. Congratulations Steve and look forward to seeing you at Reading.

One final thing for everyone — would you like to see this sort of thing again in this column? Harder? Easier? Let us know.

Don Turnbull

'Zine & the Art of Editing

Advice for would-be fanzine editors from Mike Lewis of DragonLords

There are several hundred fanzines in the UK and they cover everything from Science Fiction to music, taking in comics, films and **Scrabble** on the way. Included among these are some 20 or so fanzines that are devoted to fantasy games; and as **IMAGINE**TM magazine has been known to carry features on FRP, it is with these that this article is concerned. It is quite possible that you have had some contact with fanzines, even if it is only a drunken fanzine editor thrusting unwanted pieces of paper under your nose at a convention, while you were desperately searching for the TSR stand. There may even be a few misguided creatures among you who secretly desire to join the elite, the infamous few that edit their own fanzines. Well, if you have ever hankered for the power that the blue pencil affords, this article will give you some idea of how to go about it.

Before you plunge willy-nilly into editing a fanzine it is advisable to consider why you want to, and what you are hoping to get out of it. First, a word of warning; if you want to make money editing a fanzine, forget it. The fanzines that make any real profit are few and far between, and most make a loss (sometimes considerable). If you want to want to get rich then write for the prozines, or follow Uncle Don's example and work for TSR!

Why else would you want to edit your own fanzine — could you not achieve as much satisfaction and enjoyment from contributing to another fanzine? This latter alternative would save a lot of mangled fingers (as you learn to type) and wear-and-tear on the tongue (from licking envelopes and stamps), not to mention a lot of hard work. However, if your ego is anything like those of existing editors, then you just won't be able to settle for anything less than your own little baby.

Setting Up

Having decided to make your bid for everlasting fame and glory, you now have to begin the hard work of making it all come true. The first move is to decide what type of fanzine you want to produce, in terms of appearance and style of content. Styles vary from light, chatty, fannish zines like my own, late **DragonLords** which, while they do print some useful discussion articles, try to produce an entertaining read rather than a play-aid; to the dyed-in-the-wool traditionalist zines like **SEWARS** which try to print useful material that makes a positive contribution to your game, such as monsters, magic items and character classes. In between these two styles are zines such as **Tempestuous Orifice** and **Miser's Hoard** which aim to print useful discussion articles rather than useful 'hardware'. Then again, you could try the approach of the recently folded **Quasits & Quasars**, which mixes these styles freely and

effectively. It is very important to establish the style, as readers prefer a zine that has character to a thinly-disguised pastiche of **White Dwarf** or **IMAGINE** magazine. Whatever you do, don't copy the style of another fanzine and thereby produce an identical product. Although it may be very flattering for the editor concerned, you'll end up being labelled as 'Baby Warthog's Gazette' or whatever and your zine will suffer.

It is worthwhile scrutinizing existing fanzines to see what goes down well with their readers and what has already been done to death and consequently bores everyone to tears. You don't want to put off prospective subscribers by giving them a sense of *déjà vu* when they see your first issue, do you? While you should publish what you want to — after all, you are paying for the thing — it doesn't hurt to pay attention to the punters' whims. It is important to note in this respect that the topics of magic items, character classes and monsters for the D&D® game have been thoroughly explored in fanzines and it is very difficult to be original and interesting with this type of material.

With your content style set — for the first issue or so anyway — now is the time to solicit articles and artwork. The most obvious place to start, perhaps, is with your local games group or club. While they will probably regard you as some kind of freak when you announce that you are going to start a fanzine, you'd be surprised at how many gamers are frustrated writers at heart. Hit them when

And how better for a prospective editor to check out the opposition than by sending off for a selection from the following:

Tempestuous Orifice 5 seems to have settled its problems, and is out on time for a change. The quality is still high, with informative, chatty articles and good scenarios. It is probably the best frp fanzine around, but TO does seem to be aiming a little above itself with a statement about how they intend to influence the next generation of 'zines. Pretensions above their means? — only time will tell.

One magazine which might give them some competition is the rapidly improving **Demon's Drawl** 6. It still carries a lot of 'hardware' in the form of monsters, magic items and scenarios for the AD&D® game, but it mixes this with useful articles as well. Value for money.

Perhaps **Conflict of Chaos** will improve as much — at the moment it is thin on content. They sent us issues 2, 3 and 4, and they show a gradual improvement, but this 'zine still has a long way to go before it even reaches the level of the likes of **SEWARS**. Still, there are interesting ideas, like the

golfing game.

Mention of **SEWARS** leads me to the latest issue, #19. The majority of the content is made up of reviews and a scenario for the AD&D game. Also, there is the Archer 'rejected by **IMAGINE** and **White Dwarf** magazines' — in which case, one wonders, why did they bother to print it?

Imazine 6 couldn't be further away from this, with a superbly humorous parody of this very magazine. It carries lots of letters and sensible discussion of frp games as well. The 'zine continues to improve with each change of name — oh, hadn't you realised that this is the latest incarnation of Paul Mason's **Rolegaming**? Despite the fact that Paul claims that he is ignored by the readership of **IMAGINE** magazine, this magazine should continue to do well.

Before going on to investigate the pile of postal games fanzines, let's take a quick look at **Fantasy Advertiser** 85. This is the latest issue of this excellent publication, of interest to anyone even slightly interested in comics. It also covers fantasy media, SF books and role-playing in various columns. Note that Martin Lock's **Harrier Comics** label is also to be used to publish British comic works. Look out for it.

Evidence that the postal games poll run through **Mad Policy** is nearly on us comes through loud and clear amongst the postal games fanzines, as they try to pull in last minute voters. Issues are bigger, there is more chat, and the editors are actually trying to be nice about their subscribers! I can't guess who will have won the poll, but **Greatest Hits** 116 should make as good a showing as ever. This issue has chat, letters on games, computers, music and horse racing, and even rules for some new games.

Psychopath 14 deserves to do well too. Mike Dean is putting a lot into the 'zine, which now offers a wide variety of games as well as columns on SF, comics and the international hobby. Simon Billenness seems to have alienated a lot of people in the postal gaming fraternity with his anti-games stance, but **Inflammatory Material** 4 still has plenty of reading matter on music (Billy Bragg), 'zines, drugs problems, etc.

Cut & Thrust 25 remains one of the best places to play a game of *En Garde!* as well as somewhere to read well-constructed and detailed game reviews. Its namesake — **Cut & Thrust**, **The South Dorset Military Society Newsletter**, Convention Issue (try saying that in one breath) looks a good investment for

they are susceptible, such as after a night at the pub, or after an intensive 16-hour gaming session. On the other hand, it is probably not a good idea to accept articles actually written under these conditions!

Another avenue is to place an advert in leading fanzines and prozines advertising your intention of starting a fanzine and asking for contributions for it.

While gathering material for this wondrous first issue, you should decide on a production method and the initial cost of producing the zine. There is little point in coming up with the best first issue since **DragonLords 1** (not difficult actually) and then not being able to print it!!

Getting it printed

There are several options open to you for printing, with a wide range of suitable methods of reproduction:

Lithographic: Known as litho to those of us in the know, it is the most expensive of these methods and unless you can find a cheap and sympathetic printer, you may find it is out of the range of your initial budget. The masters are typed up, with the artwork laid out, and Letraset titles, etc added. The zine is then produced straight from the masters by a photographic process. It is possible to have the printing reduced from A4 to A5 (the traditional format of an A5 booklet) or from A3 to A4 (much more professional in appearance, but also far more expensive). The reduction reduces paper costs, and looks far neater than unreduced type.

An A5 booklet printed by cheapish litho is the usual format for FRP fanzines by some unwritten convention. Some have card covers, a coloured paper cover or glossy pages (as with **Wyrms Claw**), but they all have a fairly similar standard of print.

Photocopying: While this can be extremely cheap for a low print-run of, say, 50 copies, its disadvantage is that the unit

cost for each sheet doesn't decrease as you print more copies — unlike litho printing. Quality varies heavily from machine to machine. If you have access to cheap or even free photocopying then this is an excellent way of keeping down the cost of the zine. Good quality photocopying can approach the standard of litho, and several zines that appear litho'd may in fact be photocopied, you can't always be sure.

Stencil: This is probably the cheapest method of production. The zine is typed out on wax stencils and final copies are run off from those stencils. It is also possible to prepare masters in the same way as litho or photocopy with artwork, etc, and then have these transferred to stencils by Electrostencilling. However, this process is expensive and can add a significant amount to the cost of the zine. The quality of reproduction with stencils tends to vary enormously, two obvious zines to compare are **SEWARS** and **Acolyte**. The production quality of **SEWARS** suffers very badly from poor duplication and low quality photocopying; on the other hand, Pete Tamlyn prints **Acolyte** himself, and he shows that a stencilled zine can be as well laid out and presented as any other format.

The method of printing that you finally decide upon will largely depend on personal choice and the budget that you have available. You should note, however, that a lot of fans dislike stencilled zines because they tend to look cheap and tatty. This attitude stems from the flashy packaging and gloss that abounds in professional magazines and games. They expect fanzines to have the same product-

ion standards for the same money; while this viewpoint is clearly ridiculous (prozines have a circulation of 20k plus, while the largest fanzine sells just 700) it is a point worth bearing in mind, when you come to print your zine and sell it — lithoed zines sell better.

When you are calculating whether or not you can afford to print a fanzine, remember to include not only the initial print-run costs but postage and the costs of paper, typewriter ribbons, black coffee, the launch party, reviewers' bribes, etc. It is also a good idea to decide on a probable cover price at this time. The usual price for an A5, 28-40 page fanzine is 60p a copy at the moment. Fairly obviously, it is a good idea to price your zine favourably with the others around, but be sensible and make sure that you don't lose too much or you will not be able to print the next issue!

Having decided on the method of printing and the format of the zine, it is time to visit your local printers. It is very important to try as many different printers as you can find, because quotes vary enormously from one printer to the next. For instance, a 24 page A5 litho zine with a print run of 200 can vary from £60 to £200! When you are going to a printer, take a fanzine with you to show them the type of product you are trying to produce — printers tend to get anxious and confused when you mention things like D&D and role-playing to them — so something concrete settles their nerves (no, I don't mean a brick to the head, either!). Also, ask for examples of their printing, so that you can judge what kind of quality they produce.

When you have chosen your production method, find out from the printer how to prepare the masters and any hidden costs involved (photographs, for instance, have to be screened and that is an additional expense). When the zine has been put together and you are willing to let the thing out on the streets with your name and address included, then get it printed.



new, but offers a good game of En Garde!, and has the distinction of offering a game called **Baseball Wars**. **Hopscotch 41** continues to provide an excellent games service for a wide variety of games, and this issue sees the start of the first **Diplomacy** game to be GM'd by a computer. **Walamalaysia Gazette 43** comes with 'PANIC NOW!' in uncomfortable letters all over the cover — still offering a very reliable game of postal Diplomacy if nothing else. **Year of the Rat 2** continues to show the layout and design skills of Ian Marsh with a superb **Danger Mouse** cover. Ian writes about things that interest him — the column on game holdovers looked pretty well.

Finally, **NMR! 50** celebrates reaching an advance age with unusual style, with a printed games section, and a chat section on cassette! The tape is good quality, and contains some really classic moments, such as the Pete Tamlyn interview.

Contact Addresses

Tempestuous Orifice (60p), Patrick Fama, 15 York Close, Morden, Surrey SM4 5HW; **Demons Drawl** (55p), Jeremy Nuttall, 49 Longdown Road, Congleton, Cheshire; **Conflict of Chaos** (45p), no address shown; **SEWARS** (60p), Chris Baylis, 12 The Fryth, Basildon, Essex SS14 3PN; **Imazine** (45p), Paul Mason, 24 Moor St, Earsdon, Coventry CV5 6EQ; **Fantasy Advertiser** (50p), Martin Lock, 3 Marlow Court, Britannia Square, Worcester; **Greatest Hits** (50p), Pete Birks, 65 Turney Rd, LONDON SE21 7JS; **Psychopath** (40p), Mike Dean, 29 Peasholme Drive, Scarborough, N YORKS YO12 7NA; **Inflammatory Material** (40p), Simon Billeney, Falkner/Egginton Court, Loughborough, Leics LE11 3HT; **Cut & Thrust** (40p), Derek Wilson, 321 Headley Rd East, Woodley, Reading, Berks; **South Dorset Military Society Newsletter**, Flat 4, Inverclyde House, Inverclyde Rd, Lower Parkstone, Poole; **Tales From Tanelorn** (50p), Matt Williams (address as Imazine, above); **Take That You Fiend** (35p), Kevin Warne, 48 Boscombe Ave, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 1JG; **Gamesmaster** (35p), Steve Fielding, 262 Beake Ave, Radford, Coventry CV6 3AY; **Barbarous League**, Paul de la Pena, 7 Hulton Close, Marton, Cleveland TS7 8BL; **Mouse Police** (30p), Rob Wilson, 6 Shorefields, Benfleet, Essex SS7 5BQ; **Masters of the Prime**, Bryan Betts, 4a Whitefield Flats, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL; **Hopscotch** (40p), Alan Parr, 6 Longfield Gdns, Tring, HERTS HP23 4DN; **Walamalaysia Gazette**, Dave Thorby, 200 Lavender Hill, Enfield, Midds EN2 8NJ; **Year of the Rat**, Ian Marsh, c/o Games Workshop, 27-9 Sunbeam Road, LONDON N10; **NMR!** (£1), Brian Creese, 256 Canbury Park Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, SURREY

wargamers. **Tales From Tanelorn 7.5** is Matt Williams' attempt to become more frequent, and is accompanied by issue 7.502!! Plenty of gossip and unusual games with a Moorcock-fantasy bias. **Take That You Fiend International 20** is an attempt to prove that even **Tunnels & Trolls** players are accepted everywhere, as the editors try to show how many overseas subscribers they have. The games in TTYF aren't all T&T-based, however, as **Title Bout** is also on offer.

Gamesmaster 2 appeared after the long gap since issue one. We are assured that this is due to one editor's drink problem, among other things. SF and comics feature strongly, as well as sports games. **Barbarous League 3** is also relatively new, and this issue sees the start of its first game, **United**. The editors wrote to us to say that, having been introduced to the postal gaming hobby through this section of **IMAGINE** magazine, they were now turning the wheel full circle by sending in a 'zine to be reviewed. Are you sure you want people to know this, lads?

Mouse Police 5 is really an En Garde! game going public, with postal **Scrabble** and **Railway Rivals** on offer. Odd, but promising. **Masters of the Prime** isn't

Clubs

On this page we will advertise your club, or appeal for other gamers to found a new club in your area, free of charge.

A request to begin with. David White, 13 Exford Close, Coronation Estate, Weston-Super-Mare, Avon is looking for fellow gamers in the **Weston-Super-Mare** area. He is 19, and is interested in AD&D, Traveller and other games.

Likewise, Eoin Haughey, 43 Monbriek Walk, Taghnaven, Lurgan, Craigavon, Co Armagh BT66 8PP is looking for novice players in the **Lurgan** area. He says he'll play anything — Runequest, Traveller, AD&D... even that Bunny game!

The Castle Fantasy & Wargames Society have produced a flyer to proclaim their emergence from a previous incarnation as the Banbury games club. They sound quite a wierd bunch, but do turn up at the Elephant & Castle, **Banbury** if you have a strong nerve. They meet every other Monday (from June 11th) at 7pm. You can make sure that you have the right time by ringing 'Troll' (Andy Johnson) on Banbury 50430. Membership is £2 a year.

Events

Organisers of role-playing events should take care to inform us at least **TWO MONTHS** in advance, for free publicity in these pages.

Write to **IMAGINE** magazine, The Mill, Rathmore Rd, Cambridge.

Most of you reading this will have just missed **Dragonmeet** (Saturday July 28th, Central Hall, WESTMINSTER. Entrance £1.50), so how can you console yourself?

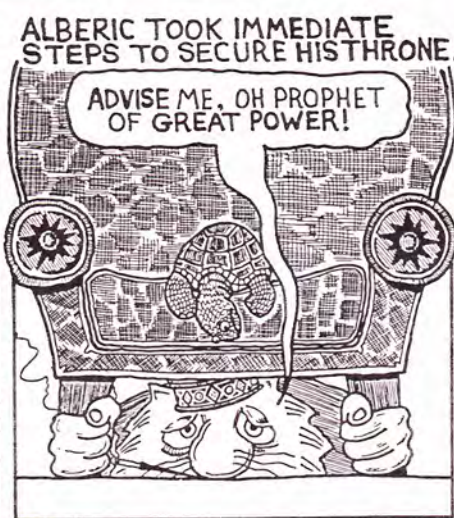
Oxcon (Aug 24-27) draws very close now, but the next event we have details for is **Mythcon**. Guest of Honour at the Humberside College of Higher Education, Hull, September 7th-9th will be Anne McCaffrey. Mythcon is small and friendly, the ideal first convention for aspiring fans, particularly ones from t'North. Also there, Brian Froud, best known for **Dark Crystal**. Contact Penny Hill, 53 Glencoe St, Hull, N Humberside HU3 6HR.

The South East London Wargames Group hold their annual Open Day, Sunday, September 23rd, at the Greenwich Borough Hall, London SE10. Wargame demonstrations, and modelling competitions. Further details from George Willoughby, 01-698-9468.

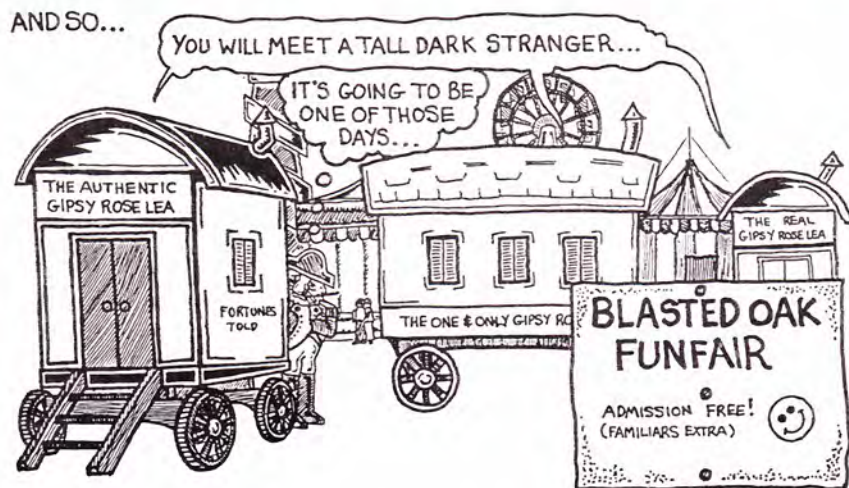
There is a great opportunity for everyone to get confused in the autumn, as two conventions adopt the title **Midcon**. The Diplomacy-based con has had publicity through these pages before. The new arrival is **Midcon '84**, a Star Trek Convention. The Guests of Honour at the Leicester International Hotel over the weekend October 12th-14th are to be George (Lt Sulu) Takei and Bruce (Lt Kevin Riley) Hyde. Money is to be donated to the Downs Children Association, and there will be competitions, fancy dress and a carnival. Contact Terry Elson, 8 Ennerdale Close, Oadby, Leicester LE2 4TN.

Lastly, there's **Conquest**, an SF Con at the Ingram Hotel, Glasgow over the same weekend. Films, art room, dealers room, writing competition, and Guests Wendy and Richard Pini. Membership Secretary is Pat Brown, 104 Pretoria Rd, Patchway, Bristol BS12 5PZ.

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Notices

B-17 - QUEEN OF THE SKIES

After some years away from the war-games table and still subject to the same restrictions on time which have kept me out of wargaming for too long, it is a pleasure to be back again, albeit to review a fairly simple solitaire game. Avalon Hill Games' **B-17** is all about the Allied (they say American) bombing raids on various military targets (airfields, factories, rail-yards, etc) in France, Belgium, The Netherlands and Germany in the 1942 period. It is devised as a solitaire game with the sole player acting as the B-17 (no, it is not a role-playing game — he is not the pilot, bombardier or whatever and this is just as well since the mortality rate is pretty high).

A solitaire game has numerous idiosyncracies by definition. The first is that, if it succeeds as a solitaire game, it is virtually impossible to make it into a sensible 2-player game, yet all solitaire games (including this one) include a 2-

player option which is pretty artificial and downright dull for the second player. Secondly, it relies on a host of charts, tables and die rolls to simulate the "other side" and this can make a solitaire game mechanically rather a drudge; fortunately this is not the case here since, once the mechanics are understood, the game flows very well. Thirdly, the solitaire game can suffer from the difficulty, which there seems to be no way of overcoming, that solitaire players have no opponent to remind them of various stages in the procedure which they have, wittingly or otherwise, overlooked. The game might therefore become rather easier than intended if you forget to perform one of your opponent's activities from time to time. A check sheet showing each stage in the procedure might be a useful device to help overcome this.

Back to **B-17**. The components are attractive. The strategic map shows the

targets, the US Airforce base in England and various radial zones centred on the latter, through which the B-17 must move to and from the target. Each turn consists of moving the B-17 from one zone to the next (or turning it around if it is over its target) and then deciding what happens to it. There is provision for enemy fighter attacks, friendly fighter escort and (in the target area) the effects of weather and flak. The bomber board shows a plan layout of the aircraft and crew counters are placed in the appropriate locations at the beginning of a mission. As enemy fighters penetrate the defence screen (which in any case only exists over a portion of France and Belgium) damage will eventually be incurred by the plane and its occupants. This can vary from superficial damage with no significant effect, through wounding of crew, reduction in efficiency of controls and engines, the knocking out of

01 - The Gem and the Staff

This is the first in the one-on-one series of modules. The idea behind them is that one person DMs whilst the other plays a character, in this case Eric the Bold, an 8th level thief, and then for the second part of the module the DM and player swap roles. The module

consists of two related robberies, one for each player, in which Eric has 30 minutes to steal a magical item from a wizard's stronghold. Time is extremely tight and none of my many playtesters (including myself) managed either job inside the 30 minutes.

The scoring system provided doesn't always give a good indication of how well a player does and it would probably be best to devise your own if you want to use one for a competition. However most fun can be had, and the spirit of the D&D® game best adhered to, by playing the first half-hour, seeing how far you get and then, if necessary, playing on to the end.

It is obvious that a lot of thought has gone into this

module. There is a separate map book of nicely drawn plan views of all the rooms in both strongholds, which can be used as floor plans. Some of the connecting doors, however, are not shown, which spoils things a bit. There is a DM's master map, which shows how the rooms in the map book link up; however not all of the tower in the first adventure is shown. The rest would have been useful, if only for completeness.

Nine double-sided cardboard figures representing Eric and all, except one, of the other characters, are provided, another nice touch. Another good idea are the tear-out adventure summaries for the DM. The summaries consist of one side on each adventure detailing most of the information essential to play; one omission, though, is the status of each door, ie open/shut, locked/unlocked. 'Door Status', something which is very important in an adventure such as this, is also omitted from some of the room descriptions in the main text.

Incidentally, an unfortunate mistake on one of the maps in the map book shows one of the traps. I hope you do better than I did whilst playing; I spotted the trap, but fell in trying to climb round it!

All in all this is an excellent module giving you the chance to play a high level thief adventuring in his element. Highly recommended.

 Chris Hunter

B-17 (£13.50) is from Avalon Hill, 650 High Road, N Finchley, London N12 0NL

01 and M2 are both TSR modules, costing £4.50 each.

Maze of the Riddling Minotaur is the second of TSR's invisible ink solo modules. It is a 'rescue the princess' adventure and this time she is being held in a maze full of Minotaurs. The King, who presumably hasn't heard of the advantages of adventuring in groups, has been sending off his Champions one by one to get killed in the maze. Guess who's next?

The rescue is not easy. I got through two and a half of the pre-generated 6th level characters provided with the module before I managed it and I think I did quite well. Incidentally, there is a clever magic item enabling you to get around the problem of knowing all that any previous character has done and seen. The map of the maze is laid out so that you have to go

Games Reviews

various gun turrets, etc, to the cataclysm, fortunately at low probability, that an enemy fighter's shot happens to detonate the bombs on board and blows up the entire works.

The object of the exercise is to complete 25 missions. The first 5 are easy ones to nearby targets with good fighter cover, the second 5 are relatively easy missions, again to close targets, but with variable fighter cover, and the remaining 15 can vary from the simple to the brutal (for example, a very long journey indeed to La Rochelle to destroy the U-boat base, most of the journey being through areas bristling with German fighters and which English fighters cannot penetrate). Ideally, one starts with a particular aircraft and a particular 10 man crew and these various components survive the entire 25 missions. Needless to say, it is not usually as simple as this and, though my first aircraft survived 13 missions before

going down in flames over some German railyards. I ran through another 5 very expensive machines before completing the 25 missions. Do not under any circumstances name the crew after your nearest and dearest, since though they may survive the early part of the campaign, there seems very little chance indeed of anybody surviving the full 25 and going home to the USA to be decorated as a hero.

The rules are pretty comprehensive and span at least the obvious eventualities. Among the variety of things covered are bail-outs, the consequences of the bomber being forced to leave formation, how a fit crew member can take over the gun of a dead companion, the variable effects of bombing, forced landings on land and water, variable enemy fighter attacks and so forth. One particularly gruesome section deals with the fate of the poor bloke in the ball turret (the one

slung underneath the fuselage), who finds that the turret mechanism has jammed and he can't get out when the plane comes in for a forced landing without undercarriage...

I said earlier that this game moves along pretty well once you have got hold of the mechanics. It is quite exciting in play, which presumably means that it simulates the actual events reasonably well. Fortunately, I do not have any direct first-hand experience of the actuality. The mechanics are simple and relatively uncluttered, consistent with the need for solitaire play and, though there are a few so-called optional rules, they are neither particularly complex nor particularly long-winded. Despite the price (£13.50, which may seem a trifle expensive for a simple solitaire game) I can recommend this for a casual and not too serious diversion from more stressful games.

Don Turnbull



M2 - Maze of the Riddling Minotaur

through most of it before reaching your goal, and having the paragraph numbers on the map itself means that you should not lose your place in the text.

The text and diceless combat system are easy to follow. However, I did find 2 minor mistakes. In 37 it should say 'from encounter 21' not 16 and C36 reads 'Zombie Minotaur' when it should read 'Large Gecko Lizard', which of course, unlike the Minotaur, will not usually be turned by a 3rd level Cleric!

One problem with these invisible ink modules, where the pen 'magically' reveals what is written in the decision box, is that it is sometimes easy to see whether or not something is going to happen by how big the box is. Also, a

problem with any solo is the lack of choice the player gets. For instance, though none of the previous Champions have returned (except one who is insane), the boatman who took each one of them to the maze has returned each time without a scratch. A mite suspicious, eh? Well, before you even get a chance to make a decision, he is lowering you into a pit on the end of a rope and saying goodbye to you, probably for the last time!

Once you have finished the solo adventure the module can also be run as a reasonably good group adventure, where, unlike the solo, you can actually meet the people responsible for the kidnapping. In group play, though, the map of the maze soon becomes incredibly boring, so I

would suggest you photocopy it before revealing any of the hidden rooms and then give the photocopy to the players to use as their map.

If you don't mind the limitations of solo modules like this one, you will probably enjoy M2. A final word of warning, though. Use your invisible ink pen sparingly or it might run out like mine nearly di

Chris Hunter



Notices

Battlebikes

Battlebikes is the first expansion kit for the highly popular, deadly-driving, board game, **Battlecars**. It comes in a slimline version of the regulation 'bookcase game' box and has the same front picture as its predecessor.

The contents are disappointing, being neither remarkably different, nor more excitingly adventurous than those already found in **Battlecars**; in fact an enterprising gamer could, with a pencil, paper, ruler and a couple of hours, knock up a far more enthusiastic sequel while repainting the Sistine Chapel with the other hand.

For your £4.95 you get 8 counters for each of **Battlebike**, pedestrian and speed counters; 6 cards for **Battlebike**, pedestrian and reference; 2 sheets of plain red, die cut, damage markers, 28 markers for the curiously-named 'passive' weapons — spikes, mines oil and smoke — and 3 sheets of (non-passive?) weaponry, of which 12 pieces are rockets which, the rules boldly announce, **cannot** be fired by **Battlebikes**. Now, when you consider that rocket-firing motor bikes were used in an 007 movie some 10 years back, it is hard to visualise a purpose-built, futuristic, two-wheeled war machine not being capable of firing what must be described as an archaic weapon. If one is reduced to

firing the wimpish shells and machine guns from such a technically advanced weapon (as a **battlebike** is), one might just as well sneak up behind one's opponent and shout 'bool'. However, the delight

one feels when the opponent is suddenly caught in a trap and knows he is about to be given a lethal injection of rocket explosion up his rear tail pipe can only be described as evilly sadistic — or nice!

To emphasise that this is a supplement for an existing game, the Games Workshop designers have specifically omitted another playing board, thus if you haven't already bought **Battlecars**, you cannot play **Battlebikes**.

The rules are almost identical to **Battlecars**, as might be expected, with minor changes to incorporate the extra manoeuvrability of a bike as opposed to a car, and there are a few modifications to the original rules which in my opinion should have been made public through the magazine media for those players who have already obtained **Battlecars** and may not be about to purchase **Battlebikes**.

There is much that could and should have been added to this game — new weaponry (lasers, for example), tougher armour (double or even treble thickness?), and faster machines (bigger engines?), etc.

At the back of the rules booklet there are two rather weak scenarios which are described as being for up to 9 players. With 9 players on the small boards, it was more like a traffic jam in the West End of London, than an exciting adventure on the **Battlebikes** arena.

I am sorry to report that this boxed set has very little to offer either as an expansion kit to **Battlecars**, or as a game in its own right (using the **Battlecars** playing boards of course).

 Chris Baylis

SF3 - Sundown on Starmist

Sundown on Starmist is set on an unexplored world. The location of the Starmist system is not specified, allowing the referee to place it into any existing **STAR FRONTIERS®** campaign with little trouble.

The players are hired by one Maximilian Malligigg. With him they contact a low-tech alien race that is native to Starmist, the Heliopes. There is village politics, the discovery of high-tech artifacts, and the defeat of an evil off-world influence. As a whole **Sundown** covers a lot of ground and the players are faced with more than the old backdrop of exploration of an unknown world.

The scenario is well-presented, the illustrations and maps first class. The background to the world is rather sketchy, concentrating on a village of the natives. Yet this is not in itself a bad approach. All the players need to know within the context of the scenario is provided.

The scenario adds rules for the use of armour and heavy weapons into the **STAR FRONTIERS** system. Things like this are difficult to write into the original rules sets and are best presented in this form, ie through scenarios. Furthermore such rules are necessary in the context of science fiction gaming.

Starmist uses a simple and old theme, yet the designer has managed to add various twists and quirks, both in the way of gadgets and plot, that make Starmist a real challenge and not a scenario that becomes predictable and dull.

 Stephen Nutt

Goldfinger

This scenario takes the form of an investigation by members of the British Secret Service into the gold dealing of one Auric Goldfinger. It is suitable for one very experienced agent or up to four 'beginners'.

The format is of the standard RPG scenario with the addition of an agents dossier. This cleverly introduces documents and plans to the players. A nice touch.

As with **Octopussy**, the major characters and some of the locations have been retained but the plot altered. Indeed there are suggestions to make the differences even more startling, although the designers concede this could mean a great deal of work. Incidentally the agents' briefing contains lines which are obviously meant to be spoken with a public schoolboy accent by M. If the American GM's English accent is anything like my American one they sound pretty bad.

Also included are the details of a few items which can be obtained from Q

branch; two examples being a miniature gas sprayer and the famous Aston Martin DB-V. Johannesburg and Gstaad both have some information on them to aid play. Clearly such background is important in a spy RPG. The alternative is to use real travel guides which will mean more work and possibly expense. The background for the major NPCs is probably the fullest you will see anywhere. I liked the inclusion of paragraphs on the effect bullets (or hats) have on control panels or aircraft cabins. There is also a helpful index at the back.

Finally a reservation which the writers

Games Reviews

Caverns of the Dead

Battlebikes, expansion kit for **Battlecars** (£4.50) and **Caverns of the Dead** (£8.95) are from Games Workshop, 27/27 Sunbeam Road, London NW10 6JP.

SF3 (£4.50) is a **STAR FRONTIERS** scenario from TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Rd, Cambridge CB1 4AD.

Goldfinger (£5.95) and **James Bond 007 GM Pack** (£6.95) are from Victory Games, imported to this country by Avalon Hill of 650 High Rd, N Finchley, London N12 ONL.

These addresses are given for information only; products should be available from your local games shop

Caverns of the Dead: Dungeon Planner Set 1 by Games Workshop is, I suppose, an innovation. It describes itself as a complete adventure setting. Unlike a module or scenario, it does not provide all the details of an adventure; you do that yourself. **Caverns of the Dead** gives you an area in which to locate your efforts and also a surface to conduct play on with model figures. It certainly is slick.

What components you get are excellently produced. They include an A4 size, 8 page booklet (of which something like half is blank so that you can flesh out the details). The thin card cover of the booklet is separate, bearing several encounter tables and a facsimile of the play area, the **Caverns of the title**. This cover is somewhat fatuously described as a Games Masters' Screen. Being only A3 in size, with one fold down the middle, it screens very little and falls over a lot. I think we can disregard its pretensions to screen-dom. The other components are a very nice, A4, glossy map of Eastern Koss, which is the area in which the **Caverns** are situated; and the core of the whole package, the **Play Sheet**. This is a very well produced 80x55cm representation of the **Caverns** in 25mm scale and reproduced in the same style as GW's **Dungeon Floor Plans**. The whole set is in a colourful, sales-enhancing, box.

Two of the basic tenets of this system seem to be fundamentally flawed. One is the claim that "we do the paperwork, you have the fun". Considering that the user is expected to work out details of all the NPCs; decide on location and nature of treasure and magical items; devise and write player's information and general introduction; embellish the descriptions of corridors and rooms and design from

scratch any other levels or secret areas, I think that the "fun" is going to be delayed while "you" do some paperwork!

The other problem is the play sheet. The players can see the whole layout immediately. OK, the booklet tells us that plans of the area are readily available so that characters would know the layout. That looks like a cop out, as though someone decided that a complete dungeon layout would look stunning (which it does), and came up with this lame excuse about the ubiquity of plans of the **Caverns**. It remains to be seen if players will accept the pleasure of moving their models over a pretty board in exchange for the nail-biting tension of exploring a dungeon that is revealed bit by bit.

Caverns of the Dead does not seem to me to be comparable in value to a similarly priced module. The module will give you the results of a lot of hard work. Several detailed locations with maps and plans, new monsters — all these will be found in a typical module. **Caverns of the Dead** gives you some excellent graphical work; encounter tables with no NPC stats and the bare framework of a fairly small encounter area. And a box of course.

Caverns of the Dead is, in essence, the **Play Sheet**. The rest is scaffolding designed to make it stand up as a viable RPG accessory. Conclusion: you are better off buying a box of Games Workshop's splendid **Dungeon Floor Plans** (you can almost afford two sets for the price of CoD) and designing your own games. You won't have much more work to do and you will have lots more scope.

Doug Cowie



themselves concede. By its very nature a Bond scenario contains many locations. Here there are five including an English Golf Course and a Kentucky Stud Farm. Unfortunately such a format leaves the possibility that players will miss a section or kill a character too early. A spy RPG is even more prone to this eventuality because of the means of rapid transport and almost unlimited budget/resources. In this instance there is a useful section on how to avoid this problem. Altogether a very detailed effort which should last several playing sessions.

Nick Davison

James Bond 007 Gamesmaster Pack

The most attractive feature here is undoubtedly the sheet of stand up figures and vehicles. They are made from heavy duty card, have merely to be pressed out, and have plastic bases. They include a Lotus Esprit and personalities such as Oddjob. Clearly the latter could have a limited life-span if your players belong to the psycho killer brigade. Nevertheless good playing aids which might be useful for other games.

In comparison the gridsheet is disappointing. Consisting as it does of a

flimsy blue sheet of paper marked with 16 by 11 squares. Also included are a fairly standard GM's screen and 40 character sheets.

A comprehensive set of gaming aids of varying degrees of value.

Nick Davison



AND THEN THERE WERE THREE

A Preview of the D&D® Companion Set
by Frank Mentzer

The idea of a 'Companion Set' addition to the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules first surfaced in 1980. It was just an idea, way back then.... Finally, in the fall of 1982, Gary Gygax gave the go-ahead to start revising the whole D&D® game system. The new Basic and Expert sets are now complete, and on the store shelves — to be followed this summer by the Companion Set. This article is a preview of Book 1 of the two-volume boxed set; Book 2 will be previewed separately in the next issue of this magazine.

Before we get going, I'd like to thank Doug Niles and Garry Spiegel for their special work on this project. I know next to nothing about wargames, but I wanted to include the best system we could put together for mass battles. I wanted something that a non-wargamer like me could use easily, but that also would be acceptable to experienced miniatures players. I wanted a simple version, with options that could be added for more realism. And I wanted it to be easy to modify; everybody applies 'house rules' or finds little things to add that weren't covered in the original rules. I knew better than to try tackling something like this myself; I couldn't learn all the ins and outs of wargaming in a couple of weeks, or even a couple of months. So I turned this part of the project over to Doug and Garry, after explaining what I wanted. I picked at it a bit, Carl Smith and Mark Acres helped fiddle and polish, and various TSR design staff members playtested it. The wargamers around here say that it'll handle anything. 10 bugbears? — okay; 5 thousand orcs? — fine; 1,000,000 dwarves? — no problem; 60 red dragons, 83 wyverns, and 7 air elementals against 9 25th level wizards and 41 elves riding pegasi? — a piece of cake. The system is called the 'War Machine,' and it's one of the highlights of the Companion Set.

And now, without further ado....

PART 1: GENERAL NOTES

Throughout the revisions of the Basic and Expert Sets, and now in creating the Companion Set, our work has been guided by three simple rules. First, the game must be fun — else why play it? Second, it must be playable. Many details of medieval times, although historically accurate, are complex and disorganized — generally all too 'human' to use in a game. Third and perhaps most important of all, it must be true — true to the spirit of the Original D&D game. That unique combination of fantasy wargaming and role-playing spawned a new type of game, not merely new rules — a precious thing indeed.



Few of today's players can remember the excitement of a decade ago, when 'Tactical Studies Rules' was just a new name on a new game. The imaginative and often amazing ideas in those little brown books labelled 'Dungeons & Dragons' took the gaming world by surprise — and by storm. Now, this new Companion Set is larger than those original rules, and is the third of a series. Comparing these sets to the Original, one might ask why all this is necessary — and where did it all come from?

The original ideas were both simple and complex. They were simple, giving the briefest of instructions for various new concepts, but complex in their implications. To grab just one: If a cleric can create food and water, what does

that do to famine; to siege warfare; indeed, to a whole fantasy world? Lacking time, space, and experience with the new system, the original designers left much for future development. Their future has now become our present.

The changing game

To see how the D&D game itself changes to suit all levels of characters, we need to think of the 'long-term' game in these three sections.

Beginning and low-level characters (levels 1-6) are learning the ways of adventuring, and do not usually think about the many years ahead. Dungeon adventures are common, and a few short wilderness journeys usually occur. The characters' homes may be 'assumed' for game purposes, or perhaps they reside in a boardinghouse in their home town. Character levels 1-3 are explained in the D&D Basic Set, and levels 4-6 in the D&D Expert Set.

'Name' and mid-level characters (levels 7-14) often travel far and wide. Long journeys, deep dungeons, and special tasks are typical adventures in this range. The character builds or buys a stronghold, or takes rooms in another's castle in exchange for services or payments. This range of characters is also detailed in the D&D Expert Set.

Upper-level characters (levels 15-25) continue the exploration (or conquest) of the world. PC rulers gain power and wealth, while travellers gather knowledge and fame. Other planes of existence are explored. By level 25 the 'home base' has become either a fortified castle complex or a secret stronghold. Epic quests and other-planar problems are typical adventures. Upper-level characters are detailed in the D&D Companion set.

(And, for those who are wondering where things go from there, let it suffice — for now — to say that characters of levels 26-36 will be detailed in the **D&D Master Set**, and characters beyond the 36th will be described in the

PART 2: COMBAT

New armour and weapons

The Companion Set introduces two new armour types — scale mail and banded mail — to complete the range of possible armour classes (9 to 3, without shield). The list of available armour now goes like this:

AC	TYPE	ENCUMBRANCE
7	Leather armour	200 cn
6	Scale mail	300 cn
5	Chain mail	400 cn
4	Banded mail	450 cn
3	Plate mail	500 cn
(-1)	Shield	100 cn

These new weapons are included as well: bastard sword, blackjack, blowgun, bola, heavy crossbow, net, trident, and whip. Complete details and descriptions for each are given in the set.

Unarmed combat

Normal armed combat procedures are used whenever a character uses an unlisted 'weapon' to attack (such as, in brawls, throwing mugs, tables, and chairs; these are unlisted weapons).

Unarmed combat is, obviously, combat without weapons (a fist is not considered a weapon). It is usable by all character classes. The attacker either strikes an opponent (with a fist, kick, etc) or tries to grab an opponent (or jump on, tackle etc). Thus, two systems are used; one for 'Striking' including all unarmed blows, and one for 'Wrestling' for all other forms of unarmed combat.

Striking: Although any creature may attempt to strike an opponent, few can do it well. A strike can normally result in either a stun or a knockout. Some adjustments apply for size differences, and certain creatures are immune to some or all of the effects (such as those damaged only by magic or silver weapons, non-corporeal and goopy critters, and so forth).

To make a strike, a standard hit roll is used. Base damage is 0, plus strength bonus (if any). The victim must check for stun, and must also make a saving throw or suffer a brief knockout.

Wrestling: Nearly anyone can wrestle. As with striking, certain creatures are immune to the effects (notably non-corporeal and goopy critters). A new game mechanic is introduced

— the 'Wrestling Rating' (WR), calculated as follows for characters:

Divide the character's level by 2, rounding up; apply all bonuses and/or penalties for high or low strength and dexterity scores; and add the character's armour class, not counting magic or dexterity adjustments.

When two combatants engage each other and at least one of them wants to wrestle, each opponent rolls d20 and adds his WR to the roll. The opponent with the higher number has gained the advantage, and either grabs the other combatant (if unarmed) or attacks normally (if armed). If two unarmed opponents are involved, one of them must win three consecutive wrestling rolls — getting a grab, then a fall, then a pin — before the opponent is helpless. Other possibilities abound, of course; the rules in the Companion set cover these.

Various simple and logical adjustments can be applied to all of this, and the situation is a bit more complicated for several opponents of various sizes, some armed. Once a victim is pinned, the attacker can try to inflict damage, if desired, but the victim gets a saving throw, and may break the pin.

By using unarmed combat rules, characters

final D&D game set, **The Immortals**).

When you think about the game with this sort of 'overview', you can plan what your characters want from their careers. Dungeon Masters usually plan ahead; now it's time for the players to do that too.

Companion-level games

So you have a 15th level character. What are you going to do now?

From this point, your character may travel far and near, or may settle down to rule a land. Both can be exciting, adventurous and fruitful paths to follow.

Whatever you choose, the games you play will be somewhat different. Characters in this range have many powers, and can easily handle the 'routine' monsters. Adventures become much more than simple 'kill monster, grab treasure' affairs. Role-playing becomes more important, and more fun.

Characters become more independent. When the characters started their careers, they needed each other just to survive. But now a few trolls present nothing more than an opportunity for exercise, rather than deadly danger. Now the characters aren't as dependent on each other; they can survive and prosper as individuals. The persons with whom a character adventures are now more important as friends, and no longer must necessarily serve as bodyguards for one another.

The campaign world plays a large part in D&D games of this range. Although a few dungeon or wilderness adventures are quite acceptable 'just for fun' consider the characters' reasons for being: Why is your character a professional adventurer? Does your character have goals — power, riches, fame, knowledge? Why is your character venturing into deadly danger every week? What keeps him going?

are free to perform acts of heroic fantasy — wrestling huge opponents to the ground, or escaping from imprisonment when no weapons are available. Unarmed combat is actually the most common of all forms of combat, and can now be used as often as desired.

These systems may be applied to any unarmed attack. A giant may attempt to kick a halfling; a character may attempt to use a shield to 'bash' an opponent (both are treated as strikes). If a purple worm attacks a town, the guards may all try to pile onto the creature, rather than risking normal combat and being swallowed (though dozens of guards would be needed to stop the monster in this way).

The DM and players should try the systems and decide whether to use them. However, if the DM does not allow unarmed combat, the DM must also decide what to do when characters attempt something of this sort. For example, if a party member is enchanted in some way and attacks other characters, the others will probably want to stop the victim without inflicting damage.

This is quite reasonable, but only an unarmed combat system (or magic) can handle the resulting situation.

PART 3: STRONGHOLDS

Part of Book 1 (also known as the Players' Companion) is used to explain the typical staff in a castle or stronghold. Some typical servitors (servants) are: armorer, barber, carpenter, cellarman (wine steward), cook, dairyman, falconer, forester, gardener, groom, kennelman, miller, portlanman, potter, poultryman, stonemason, and weaver. Many peasants are also needed to work the fields, perform menial tasks, and handle other routine jobs.

Most rulers have advisers to handle the many details of the dominion and stronghold, and to advise the ruler as needed. The most common advisers are the artilleryist, castellan, chaplain, engineer, guard captain, herald, magist, chief magistrate, reeve, sage, seneschal, and steward. Other officials may be needed for the proper handling of a stronghold or dominion, including a bailiff, chamberlain, equerry, magistrates, marshal, provosts, sheriffs, and wardens.



When a ruler is the liege of another ruler (a Count or a higher rank), the lesser ruler may send his children to the liege as servants and for training. A squire is the son of a noble, acting as a servant while being trained as a fighter. A lady-in-waiting is the daughter of a noble, acting as a servant while being trained in housekeeping by the matron of the household, and in search of a husband at the same time.

PART 4: CHARACTER CLASSES

Each character class description gives the usual information on hit rolls, saving throws, new spells, XP needed per level, and so forth, for levels 15-25. In addition, the Companion Set covers each character class in more detail, offering extensions of the rules found in the Basic and Expert Sets.

Clerics

The 'Turn Undead' chart in the Companion Set includes six new categories of monsters: the Phantom, Haunt, and Spirit, which are described in the set, and the Nightshade, Lich, and Special undead, which will be fully described in the forthcoming D&D Master Set.

The Companion Set also features details for wandering and land-owning clerics, and a new option for members of this class: the Druid. A neutral cleric may choose to live and travel in the wilderness, becoming familiar with nature and the ways of the woods. The cleric must find and live in a woodland home, meditating for 1-4 months. During that time, the cleric is found, tested, and taught by a higher-level druid (usually 25th level or greater), and then (if all goes well) joins the realm of the druids.

A druid is pure neutral, never lawful or chaotic. The druid's way of life is devoted to the balance of all things, and the study of nature. Any change of alignment results in the loss of all druid benefits until neutral alignment is restored.

The main differences between a druid and a normal cleric are that (1) the druid cannot cast any spell that affects good or evil; (2) new druid-only spells may be cast, in addition to most of the usual ones; (3) the druid must live in a woodland home; (4) the druid may not wear or use metal items of any sort; and (5) there are a limited number of high-level druids, and a duel with one of them must be fought at some point, using unarmed combat, if the character is to progress any further in experience levels.

Fighters

A lawful wandering fighter may be known as a Paladin if certain requirements are met. First, the fighter must swear fealty (allegiance) to a lawful church to gain paladin status, and may thereafter be summoned by the church leaders at any time. Once the title is gained, a paladin can **detect evil** at a range of up to 120' once per round; can turn undead as a cleric of one-third

the paladin's level; and, if the paladin's wisdom score is 13 or higher, he can cast cleric spells, again as a cleric of one-third the paladin's level. A paladin may only travel with a limited number of hirelings and must assist anyone (except evil creatures) that asks for help. 'Assistance' never involves donations of money or items, but only service for a short time.

A neutral wandering fighter may become a Knight. The fighter must swear fealty to royalty (a prince, king, or emperor); in return, the ruler will declare that character a knight. Then ruler then becomes the knight's 'liege'. Lawful and chaotic fighters may become knights if they do not become paladins or avengers (see below), whether by choice or by failure to meet the requirements for those two categories. If summoned by his liege, the knight must obey as quickly as possible. If the knight ever refuses (or swears fealty to another liege), very severe penalties are applied. A knight may visit any castle, of any territory, and demand sanctuary; the castle owner must then give the knight a place to stay for up to 3 days, along with food and drink. Finally, if a call to arms sounds, the knight is required (in most cases) to immediately travel to the ruling castle of the territory, and serve as ordered by the ruler.

A chaotic wandering fighter may become an Avenger if certain requirements are met. To become an avenger, the fighter must make an alliance with a chaotic church (this is not a swearing of fealty, but a loose agreement of loyalty and support). The avenger may be summoned by the church leaders at any time. An avenger can **detect evil** and cast cleric spells as a paladin does (see above). An avenger can turn undead in the same manner, but may choose to control them instead of gaining the usual result. Though an avenger cannot have human or demi-human hirelings, the character may try to recruit a chaotic monster; if this attempt is successful, the creature will follow and obey the avenger. Finally, the avenger may demand sanctuary from any chaotic ruler, and may get sanctuary from others by pretending to be a knight.

Some new combat options are made available to fighters of all types, and to demi-humans as well — if they learn them from human fighters. These are: multiple attacks, possible whenever an attacker's adjusted hit roll is 2 or less against a given opponent;

smashing, where the attacker accepts a penalty to hit, but if the attack succeeds he can add his entire strength score as a damage bonus; parrying, which affords a defender extra protection (attacks are -4 to hit) against most attack forms; and disarming, an 'attack' that does no damage but forces the defender to 'check against dexterity' or drop his weapon.

Magic users

A land-owning magic user may build or seize a tower, with interesting results. A dungeon may be built beneath or near it. The dungeon is most often constructed by specialists in mining who are hired by the magic user, but it can be created magically if the proper spells are known and used. When one or more levels of the dungeon are completed and then left open, monsters will start moving in to live there. Shortly thereafter, low-level adventurers will start arriving to seek their fortunes. Most magic users with dungeons visit them once each month (or more often), gathering any magical treasures that remain. If too much treasure is taken from the creatures, they will probably move out soon after. Occasionally, if this is done quietly and secretly, the magic user may take some of the monsters for use in magical research and potion making. This must be done carefully, lest the remaining monsters be scared away.

A land-owning magic user may wish to become a Magist. This is a powerful position in any castle or stronghold. The magist advises the ruler in matters involving magic, and handles the magical needs of the ruler and the stronghold. A magist may go on normal adventures if the ruler gives permission. The ruler knows that a more experienced magist is a more powerful magist, and will usually give this permission if the magist's services are not urgently needed at present.

Spell note: The maximum damage produced by any single spell — including **fire ball**, **lightning bolt**, and **delayed blast fire ball** — is 20 dice, of the type specified (usually d6). This is very important for game balance, and should not be disregarded. For example, without this limit, a high-level magic user could instantly slay any other magic user by surprise, regardless of the results of the saving throw!



Thieves

A thief who wishes to settle down must contact the Thieves' Guild. The guild will help establish the thief as a guildmaster for a new branch of the guild (perhaps in a faraway town where no guild currently exists), or may send the thief to an existing guild to fill a vacancy. Income will be gained from the activities of the guild members. The character can, at some point, ask for control of a larger branch of the guild (and this is recommended when the character reaches 18th level), and may eventually become a powerful official in the guild headquarters.

Skilled (high-level) thieves are always needed for difficult and unusual adventures, and the guildmaster thief is the person contacted by adventurers when such jobs are available. The guildmaster thief may choose to take the job, or may allow one or more of the guild members to have it, but the guildmaster gets first choice in any case.

A wandering thief is known as a Rogue. A rogue must remain a member of the Thieves' Guild, though he need only visit the guild headquarters once a year. A rogue can never become guildmaster of any existing guild (though a new branch may be started with this goal in mind). However, a rogue may visit existing guildmasters and obtain local information, tips and rumours.

Demi-humans

All demi-human adventurers are very limited in levels of experience and hit points. Elves are simply incapable of learning the arts of powerful magic (spells of higher than 5th level), and no demi-human can match a human's 'staying-power' as indicated by hit points.

Though their history is long, demi-humans have never developed the art of combat to a high degree. However, humans did concentrate their talents in this area. In locales where demi-humans can learn additional fighting skills from their human friends. Thus, the player of a demi-human character should keep track of experience points earned after the character's maximum level is reached; as this figure increases, combat ability improves accordingly (as given in each class description).

Each demi-human clan has a sacred item, called a Relic, which is kept in the centre of the clan stronghold. The relic is tended by a keeper and 2-8 aides. A forge of Power rests at the heart of every dwarven clan; it may be used to create a dwarven lens and the extremely rare oil of darkness. A Tree of Life stands at the centre of every elven clan; it may be used to create an elven lightship and oil of sunlight. A Crucible of Blackflame rests at the heart of every halfling clan. Blackflame acts as the reverse of normal flame; it burns cold and dark, igniting things that normal flame does not burn, able to burn ashes and leave behind whole items. The Crucible, a pyramid-shaped wooden container, may be used (along with the Blackflame itself) to create a web of shadows and the extremely rare oil of moonlight.

The position of keeper is hereditary; each keeper passes the secret knowledge of the tending and use of the relic to his or her son or daughter, never writing down any details, lest they be stolen. This secret knowledge includes how to construct a special item, as given in each class description.

A demi-human character gains resistance to some special attack forms when the character acquires a certain number of experience points. When this resistance is gained, the demi-human automatically takes half damage from the attack given; a successful saving throw (of the type applicable) drops that to one-quarter damage.

With these rules in use, experienced demi-humans can often hold their own when adventuring with humans. Though their hit points are fewer, their special abilities, resistances, and competitive combat ability allows them to survive and compete.

Summary

The D&D Companion Set contains lots more information on the above topics. And this is only a summary of Book 1, the Players' Companion. Book 2, for Dungeon Masters, has the 'War Machine' mass combat system, new treasures, detailed campaign information, notes of the elemental planes, and (of course) new monsters — including the new undead, and dragons that can eat 15th level characters for breakfast. See next month's second preview article for more details.

Frank Mentzer

MAGIC & MAYHEM

continued from page 21

Tertiu, which plays by itself when commanded, the bottles of Gwydolwyn the Dwarf, which retain the heat of anything poured into them, and the bottles of Rhynnon Stiff Beard, in which no liquid ever sours.

In the early Arthurian stories Peredur is given a stone which renders him invisible, and in a strange castle he encounters a gwyddbwyll set (gwyddbwyll, called fidchell in Irish, was a boardgame, apparently similar to the Norse hnefatafl) whose pieces were playing by themselves. He helps one side, which loses, and the other side raises a victory shout like an army.

Gerald of Wales mentions a number of marvels in Ireland. A lake in Connaught is said to have two islands; on one no women or female animal can set foot without dying immediately, and on the other no one ever dies, although pain and sickness are still known and most people prefer to leave for the release of death. Another lake, this time in Ulster, has an island divided into two parts. One half has a church and is frequently visited by angels and visions of local saints, while the other is barren and blasted and haunted by devils. An island in the sea off Connaught, supposedly consecrated by St Brendan, is claimed to be free of corruption; corpses are not buried there, and do not decompose. It is also supposed to be free of mice, and apparently any mouse taken there dies immediately.

Miraculous wells are also mentioned — one in Munster turns grey the hair of anyone washing in its waters, while another in Leinster will prevent hair turning grey. One in Connaught gives water which can only be drunk by humans, and poisons horses, cattle or other animals drinking it. Another in Munster causes torrential rain throughout the province if anyone touches or even looks at it, and the rain may only be stopped by a specially performed Mass.

Arthurian legends feature a number of magical items which operate in a similar way, apparently by divine judgement; the sword in the stone is one example, and the Holy Grail, of course, could only be found by the best and purest of knights. Magical items, beings and adventurers tend to figure more prominently in the later Arthurian stories, however, and cannot be said to 'Celtic' in the same way as those in the Mabinogion.

Anyone interested in the area covered by this article will find the Penguin translation of the *Mabinogion* and the Oxford Paperbacks edition of the *Tain Bo Cuailgne* (trans T Kinsella) useful; other Penguin books of interest are *A Celtic Miscellany* and *Early Irish Myths and Sagas*. Barry Cunliffe's *Iron Age Communities in Britain*, which should be available through a library, has a number of excellent illustrations of weapons and other items used by pre-Roman British Celts, and Jim Fitzpatrick's illustrated version of *The Book of Conquests*, published by Paper Tiger, gives an excellent treatment, in most cases, of heroic-age Irish warriors and their equipment.

Graeme Davis

Fantasy Media

Colin Greenland, author of *The Entropy Exhibition* and co-editor of SF magazine *Interzone*, reviews the latest additions to the fantasy/SF media.

Allen Bauer is not a happy man. His New York greengrocery business is thriving, despite the well-meaning but ham-fisted assistance of his gigantic brother Freddie. But Allen's girlfriend has walked out, and he does not welcome his new solitude in a spirit of stoical sobriety. In fact, he gets thoroughly sloshed and ends up in the sea at Cape Cod. Allen cannot swim. He wakes up, back on the beach. His rescuer, a beautiful mute young woman wearing nothing whatsoever, smiles, kisses him succulently, and swims away. Now Allen is in love again, and desolate again, until he gets back to New York and the phone rings. A beautiful mute young woman is wandering around the Statue of Liberty with nothing whatsoever on her but Allen's sea-soaked wallet and will he please come and collect her.

Splash (Touchstone, PG) is a delightful fantasy of an impossible romance. For Madison (she learns English from TV and names herself after a street sign) is a mermaid. When she gets wet, her legs turn into a tail. She won't tell Allen for fear of losing him; and in a few days she'll have to go back home anyway. Meanwhile Dr Walter Kornbluth, who spotted her at sea off Cape Cod, is after her with buckets of water, mops and hoses, out to prove he's not mad and Madison is a creature unknown to science.

You'd think — I thought — a film about a nude mermaid would have to be twee, or crude. **Splash** is neither. Delicate direction by Ron Howard, the quicksilver charm of Daryl Hannah (last seen as the killer replicant Pris in **Blade Runner**), and the comic vulnerability of Tom Hanks as Allen all go to create something much finer than the plot might seem to promise. Even slob Freddie (John Candy) and manic Kornbluth (Eugene Levy) emerge as intelligent, sympathetic characters. **Splash** is an adult film that has the grace to treat fantasy with sensitivity and a sense of humour.

Do yourself a favour. Do something unexpected. See **Splash** and give **Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom** (Paramount, PG) a miss. Readers of this

column may have noticed my admiration for **Raiders of the Lost Ark**. The sequel is the disappointment of the year. Out goes the feisty Marion Ravenwood, a match for our reluctant hero; in comes Willie Scott (luckless Kate Capshaw, clearly cast for her scream) — a dumb blonde, no less. I



thought we'd had enough of dumb blondes. Enough too of a winsome kiddy Chinese sidekick who copies Big Indy's every move with adoration. Enough of films where all foreigners are shifty, untrustworthy, given to vile foods and vile gods, and need saving from themselves by a messianic white thug. **Raiders** had the wit and lightness of touch not to take itself too seriously. **Temple** starts well, but promptly loses itself in clamorous self-importance. I couldn't care less if it outgrosses **Raiders**. It grossed me out.

Firestarter (Universal, 15) bears a superficial resemblance to a novel of the same name by Stephen King. Drew Barrymore does her best as Charlene McGee, the little girl with the truly fiery temper, but she can't maintain the awesomely high standards set for child actors these days. George C Scott is deliciously creepy as John Rainbird, the psychotic agent sent to catch this walking weapon by the Dept

of Scientific Intelligence, but gosh sakes, he's supposed to be an *Indian*. Actually, I suspect the story was ruined before it ever got to the actors: spoilt by oversimplification and the surgical removal of all King's narrative intelligence. The great final conflagration comes as a relief. Yet another movie with all its conviction reserved for the special effects.

William Morris, revered by many as the father of fantasy writing, used to make up stories and poems while working at his loom. He held that fiction should be effortless and soothing. Morris might well have approved of David Eddings' **Belgariad**, now into its third volume and showing every sign of ambling on forever. **Magician's Gambit** (Corgi, £1.75) follows Garion, the farmboy with a god in his head, and his mildly colourful friends as they quest for the legendary Orb of Aldur. For all its accumulated bulk of pages, this really is easy reading. Try it to distract you while you're weaving your next tapestry.

I've always thought there should be a way to create fantasy fiction directly out of all the imaginative work that goes into a role-playing game, but other than just transcribing an adventure step by step, I couldn't see how. One answer is Robert Asprin's **Thieves' World** (Penguin, £1.95), an anthology of stories by nine writers all set in the gloriously seedy town of Sanctuary, embarrassment of the Rankan Empire. Each writer (John Brunner, Poul Anderson, Marion Zimmer Bradley, et al) has invented a character and written his or her story to fit the locale provided. Each writer can use as many of the others' characters as they choose — provided they don't kill them off prematurely! The result is an intriguingly different fantasy anthology. All those different viewpoints and flavours really do give Sanctuary three dimensions, if not more. Bradley's sentimentality is offset by Joe Haldeman's cynicism, Lynn Abbey's poignant mystery by Robert Asprin's shrewd morality. Volume Two, **Tales from the Vulgar Unicorn**, should be out by the time this issue reaches you. I'm looking forward to it.

Colin Greenland
Look out next month for Colin's short story, **House of Straw and Paper**, which will coincide with the publication of his new book **Daybreak on a Different Mountain** (Unwin).

Back Issues



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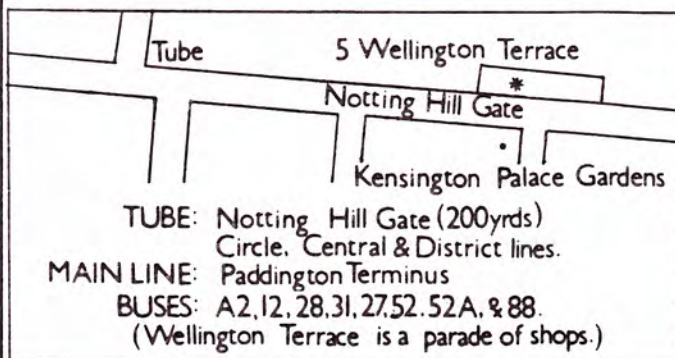
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One thing you can do is just make up the hit points of each monster in advance — as long as you don't make them all push-overs or real toughies.



Last issue I discussed the different possible approaches to the use of miniature figures in the D&D® game; it seems appropriate to continue this 'nuts and bolts' vein with a quick look at some of the other stuff a dungeon master uses. Some things, of course, are obvious. You need an adequate set of dice, and plenty of scrap paper, plus your trusty rule books. A dungeon master's screen is also worth investing in. Then, of course, you need your dungeon.

If you are using a published module or scenario, then you have to use the map and room descriptions provided. But when you are creating your own adventures, it is worth giving a thought to the material components you use.

The map, for instance. With the advent of metrication most of the graph paper you find in shops tends to be gridded in centimetres and millimetres. This is not a very useful grid for constructing dungeon floor plans on (or almost anything else, for that matter); 1cm = 50' is perhaps the most convenient scale you can get out of it, but is not the easiest scale to use. It is worth hunting round to try and find graph paper measured in inches and tenths of inches; 1" = 100' then becomes a very convenient scale. Counting the number of tenth-inch boxes gives you a quick measurement of any distance in tens of feet, and working at this scale you can plot an entire, reasonably-sized dungeon level on one sheet without having to draw anything too cramped. An alternative is the use of quadrille paper which has five squares to the inch, and is usable at a scale of 1" = 50'; at such a scale one can map rooms and corridors even more easily than a 1" = 100', but obviously, larger areas will have to be fitted on to more than one sheet. Incidentally, quadrille paper is ideal for players making maps while exploring.

Secondly, there is the matter of recording room descriptions. Many DMs I know like to use index cards and card filing boxes for this purpose. The great advantage of this system is that any time you want to revise the contents of a particular room, you can take out the relevant card and slip in a new one. The disadvantages are first, that the filing boxes are not particularly convenient to transport, and secondly, they are relatively expensive. My own preference remains for recording room descriptions on sheets of scrap

paper which I then staple into 'books', one book for each dungeon level. If you do this, remember to leave plenty of space under each room description to record changes to the room's contents during play; you may need to note the destruction of some of the furnishings, for instance, or that some item has been left in the room by a character.

How much detail you record beforehand for each room, and how much you generate when needed, is up to you, and

as long as you don't make them all push-overs or all real toughies, I don't see anything wrong with this and it saves a fair bit of wear and tear on your eight-siders.

Another thing worth preparing in advance of a game is a selection of wandering monsters — say, twenty encounters per level that the players are likely to be exploring on any particular trip. Then, suppose the players are exploring second

A page for the
not-so-experienced
adventurer

by Roger Musson

is partly dependent on how quickly you can generate it on the spot. For instance, take the hit points of monsters you place in rooms. Rolling hit points for every monster as you record it can slow up the dungeon creation process considerably — and you will inevitably spend time rolling up figures for ten balrogs that no-one is ever going to fight, or even, perhaps, come across. On the other hand, if you just write down 'ten balrogs' and the players do decide to mix it with them, you may have to say, 'hold on a minute while I roll the hit points for these things' and then go through the whole palaver while the players sit round twiddling their thumbs.

One solution to this particular problem is available to you if you have access to a computer with a printer attached, or if you know someone who has. It is a very simple task to write a program that will print out lists of numbers that are equivalent to 2d8, 3d8, 4d8, 5d8 and so on. So if you suddenly find you have half a dozen vampires coming into play, take the first six numbers off the 8d8 column, add 3 to each, and you have all the hit points you need.

If you don't have access to a computer, it is probably less time-consuming in the long run to generate such a list by hand and use it in the same way, than to bother rolling hit points for every monster in advance. There is another thing you can do, which is to cheat and just make up the hit points of each monster in advance —

level and your routine wandering monster check indicates an encounter. Instead of referring to the wandering monster tables in the usual way, you roll 1d20 and consult your pre-generated encounters for second level. This saves a lot of time in the course of play, and gives you time to make the encounters more detailed. For instance, it is a good idea to prepare in advance a few parties or non-player characters — rival teams of adventurers. You can prepare lists of their equipment, give them names, go into as much detail as you like; then, when they are met with, they will prove an interesting encounter — indeed, if they are not fought and killed, they can be held in reserve for a further encounter. In time a dialogue between the two parties, or a friendly, or even a deadly rivalry might develop. From such things are memorable campaigns made.

Roger Musson

Next month Roger will tackle the subject of alignments.

If you wish to read previous beginners' articles*, back issues of IMAGINE magazine are available at a cost of £1.00 from Dept IMBI, TSR UK Ltd.

★ #1, 2 & 3: General introduction to role-playing games; #4 & 5: Advice for beginning DMs*; #6 & 7: Hints on staying alive and completing a mission; #8: Treasure*; #9: Monsters*; #10: Allocating treasure and monsters in a dungeon*; #11: Time & motion*; #12: Role-playing; #13: Role-playing for DMs*; #14: NPCs*; #15: Mapping* *(mainly for DMs).

DISPEL CONFUSION



Role-playing games have complex rules that are open to interpretation — which can cause problems when two players interpret them differently. *Dispel Confusion* is a column intended to help by providing answers to rules questions.

At present we mainly answer questions about TSR games. While the answers we give are not fully 'official', we do have contact with the designers and a good deal of playing and refereeing experience.

An answer column needs questions, so send yours to:

Dispel Confusion, TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE.

If you don't want to wait for your question to appear in the magazine, please enclose an SSAE.

STAR FRONTIERS®

Alpha Dawn and Knight Hawks games

Q. In the rules section on 'Administering Drugs' it states that a character whose stamina is 0 or below cannot be revived after more than 24 hours. Everywhere else the rules seem to use 20 hours as a standard, so is this right?

A. The time limit should be 20 hours — a standard STAR FRONTIERS® game day.

Q. What is the limit to the number of skills a character can know?

A. The only limit is how many the character can 'afford' by spending experience points. Accumulated experience points can be spent on improving abilities, which can give a character a broad increase in the chance to perform a task, or on a new level in a particular skill. A character can 'spend' as many experience points as desired at any one time. If the referee has decided that the training rules are in effect these should also be obeyed.

It can be a long job to obtain a high level with a particular skill. For example, a character who has Piloting 6 has accumulated (and spent) at least 482 experience points to get that level of skill — and 578 experience points if he or she doesn't have a Technological Primary Skill Area. And remember, the average number of experience points per session of play should be about 4 or 5. Good pilots (in the Han Solo class) should be rare indeed.

Q. Can a Dralasite use two weapons at once without penalty?

A. Dralasites suffer a penalty for fighting with two weapons in the same way as the other character races.

Although a Dralasite may have several arms, the player must nominate one of the character's limbs as the dominant one — in the same way as humans are right or left handed. Thereafter, the Dralasite has the normal 'handedness' penalty when using a weapon with any other arm.

If the Dralasite chooses to 'draw' the dominant 'arm' back into itself another limb may be specified as the dominant 'arm', but the designation cannot be changed instantaneously.

Q. How much fuel is needed to accelerate to and decelerate from jump speed?

A. To reach jump speed a ship must be travelling at the equivalent of 180 hexes per turn on the Knight Hawks game board. To do this it must have expended 180 ADF points of fuel (per engine). An identical amount must be used once the jump has been made to slow down again, giving a total fuel consumption of 360 ADF points per engine — or 360 points of fuel per engine per jump.

This, of course, assumes that the ship is using ion engines. Hydrogen fuel, the most efficient available, costs Cr10 per unit giving a fuel cost of Cr3600 per engine.

Ships powered by atomic drives require only one fuel pellet per engine to achieve jump speed. These fuel pellets — each costing Cr10,000 — provide power for one jump and need replacing as soon as the ship leaves the Void. If an engine does not have reserve fuel pellets available, the ship is incapable of decelerating or otherwise manoeuvring.

Finally, ships with chemical drives are incapable of the sustained acceleration necessary to reach jump speed and enter the Void.

Q. How much damage will character weapons, including such weapons as rockets, do to a starship?

A. Structural damage for character weaponry is given on p24 of the Expanded Rule book. Most of these will have little effect upon a starship. Projectiles and most beams will simply bounce off the hull. However, rocket launchers will cause 45 points of structural damage, and a set charge of Tornadium D-19 will cause the usual amount of damage. A thrown charge will cause half damage. When explosives (bombs or rockets) are used against a starship it can be considered to have 200+ 2d100 structural points. Referees may increase this total in the case of ships built for the military.

Jim Bamba, Michael Brunton, Phil Gallagher & Graeme Morris.

Role-Playing for the Beginner

Derrick Norton looks at

IDENTITY CRISIS

Andrew is not very happy. Last night his first ever character, a cleric rather lacking in strength, fell foul of a group of bandits in an ambush. Before the next session commences, he is getting ready to roll up a replacement character.

Two other players are with him in the room, watching the new persona take shape. Matt and Sara are both quietly hoping that Andrew rolls up a strong, robust fighter — the border wars are causing all kinds of upheavals, and if they are to get through, they will need considerably better fighting strength than they have at present.

So, Andrew finds himself the centre of attention as he takes his 3d6 and throws — 4! A grim start, and Andrew hesitates before filling in the Strength box on his character sheet.

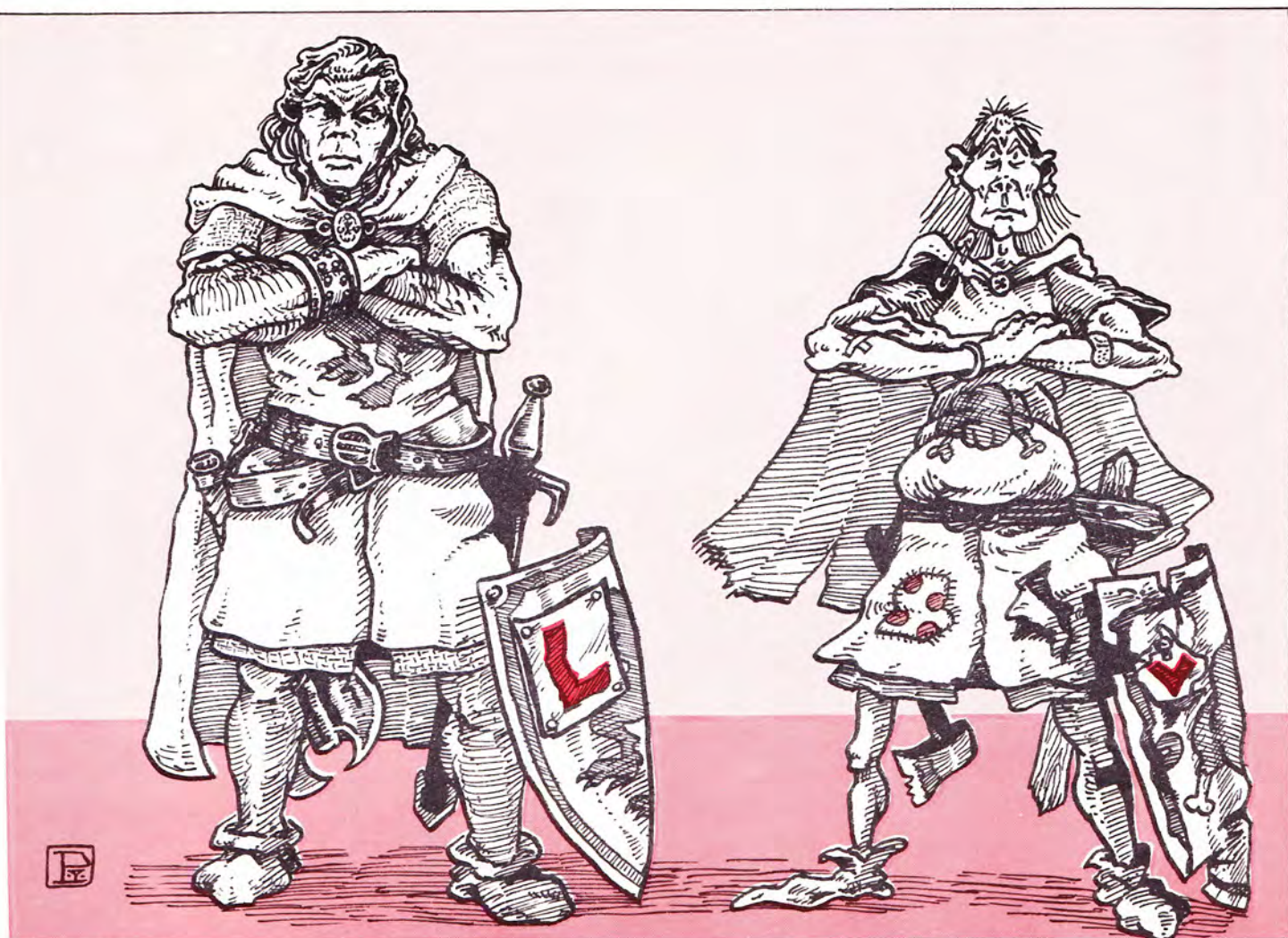
'Roll it again,' mutters Matt, aware that Pat, their DM, is only in the next room. 'It's only the first throw....'

'You can't be lucky all the time,' scolds Sara, now convinced that she knows how Matt got his 18 Dexterity/18 Constitution thief. 'Keep it, Andrew — the other throws might be better.'

'We need a good fighter, Sara!' pleads Matt, who has seen his character forced to take unacceptable risks recently.

'He's right,' Andrew adds, reaching for an eraser, and then rolling again. '16! — that's more like it....'

There can be few role-players who have not at some time succumbed to the temptations inherent in random character generation. It is easy to resist the itch to 'obtain' psionic ability or any other rare



skill, but when a prime requisite just fails to reach the mark there is a gnawing desire to grope for the eraser. The trend in modern game design is to avoid randomly determining skills and abilities, but that's an issue for another time. For now, let's look at the problem as it stands.

In part the desire for good scores is caused by a clouded view of what a character represents. For some players a character is basically a vehicle with which to propagate their own ego. Take for example the 'twin-man': a player who, for a short time, ran identical twins in a dungeon. To a fellow player it was obvious that he wanted to dictate, via his two characters, the party's actions.

In truth, though, a character is really an agent through which a player can take part in a FRP game. In an analogous manner one can consider a photographer's camera to be the agent that allows him to enjoy photography. He might wish for a better lens or whatever but his actual passion rests with the hobby and not the equipment. Likewise the true role-player does not require a mega-character in order to enjoy the game.

A beginner player rolling up new characters will naturally hope for good scores, not least because lesser values are treated with scorn by some experienced players. These comments should not be taken seriously. It is a mistake to think that high scores are in any way indicative of playing ability. Very high scores should be considered as an added bonus, they do not automatically make

that character any more interesting to play. For example, a character with high strength should behave in a 'heroic' manner if that score is to be exploited to its fullest. It is not true role-playing to use the value only as a modifier to some dice roll. Properly played, the score would also be reflected in that character's personality; confident, proud, aggressive, boastful or whatever. To a varying extent the same can also be said of all a character's attributes, whether they be good, bad or average.

So, having rolled up the relevant scores, a player will be in a position to create a basic personality for a character. As with any pastime, a beginner should not run before he or she can walk. However tempting it may be, it is not advisable to utilize the more complex components of a system before mastering the basics. The less a novice needs to remember initially, the more he will be able to concentrate on actually playing and learning a game. It is impossible to role-play a character properly when one is unsure of its limitations or powers.

Once a basic personality is reached a player can then carry on to 'individualize' a character. A player would be hard pushed to make distinctive characters from the standard scores and skills alone. There is, however, a whole range of factors over which a player can exercise control or choice. Imagination and a sense of the unusual can play a large part here; just imagine the inferiority complex of a beardless dwarf! Another method is

to pick and choose various aspects of personalities from books, comics, films or even real people. Rather than copying the whole character a player can simply use those traits that lend themselves to role-playing.

In the D&D® game, alignment represents the broad moral base upon which a character operates. Within any one alignment, however, there is wide scope to detail other peculiarities of character. For example, a really nasty character might be attracted to blood; this could then indicate a liking for very large weapons that inflict severe injuries. Taking this a stage further, such a taste for bloodletting might produce a dislike of poison, (unusual in an evil character). One can see that it doesn't take long for individualized characters to be built up; one quirk leading to another. With just a little of imagination even very minor areas of choice can be made interesting. Of course, once given, such details must be adhered to. This restriction sometimes prevents players from detailing characters beyond what is required, just in case it backfires. While in no way an invalid argument this approach does consider characters to be survival machines. Consequently a lot of characters resemble some sort of bland optimum of longevity and efficiency. By developing a strong personality one does indeed lose some freedom of action. Yet one gains, with each such character, the variability that is the hallmark of good role-playing.

Derrick Norton

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IF YOU DON'T GO TO SLEEP, THAT WHATEVER-IT-IS'LL SWOOP DOWN AND EAT YOU UP, SEE?



...EVEN THE OLD WARRIORS CANNOT COPE WITH 'SO ELUSIVE A HORROR....

WE FOUGHT DRAGONS... AH, THEY COULD KILL...

I BIN KILLED TWICE

BUT WE COULD SEE WHAT WE WERE FIGHTING...

ONCE I AD ME EAD BIT OFF AN ONCE I AD ME BODY BIT OFF



AND IT HANGS OVER THE VALLEY... NEVER APPEARING, NEVER ATTACKING... ONLY LURKING IN THE DARKNESS...



BUT, BY FOLLOWING THE ADVENTURES OF TWO OUTSIDERS, WE MAY LEARN THE SECRET OF THE VALLEY OF

PHALANX

AN EPIC IN TWELVE CHUNKS.
by R. GRENVILLE EVANS
CHUNK THE FIRST:
ARRIVAL



WHAT A PEACEFUL-LOOKING VILLAGE DOWN THERE!

YES. COME ON, IT'S TIME WE MOVED ON.

AW, WEASEL!

I DREW YOU PICTURES, DIDN'T I? ONLY THEY'RE AS BIG AS THUNDERCLOUDS, WITH WINGS LIKE SHIPSAILS-ONLY GREEN, WITH RED VEINS-AND THEY HAVE TEETH LIKE SABRES AND THEY BREATHE FIRE!

OH-WELL, LET'S HOPE WE NEVER DO MEET ONE, EH!



I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO KILL DRAGONS. WE WON'T FIND ANY DOWN THERE, NOR WICKED SORCERERS FOR ME TO THWART!

AW, WEASEL- LET'S STAY THERE FOR A DAY! WE CAN EARN SOME COINS BY SINGING AND DANCING -AND PERHAPS FASCINATE A BRACE OF MAIDENS FAIR - WHAT?!



THEY LOOK LIKE THEY NEED ENTERTAINING, SOME OF 'EM! CAN YOU SING AND DANCE?

NO! WHEN DO YOU THINK WE'LL SEE SOME DRAGONS?

I DUNNO. THEY'RE HARD TO MISS....

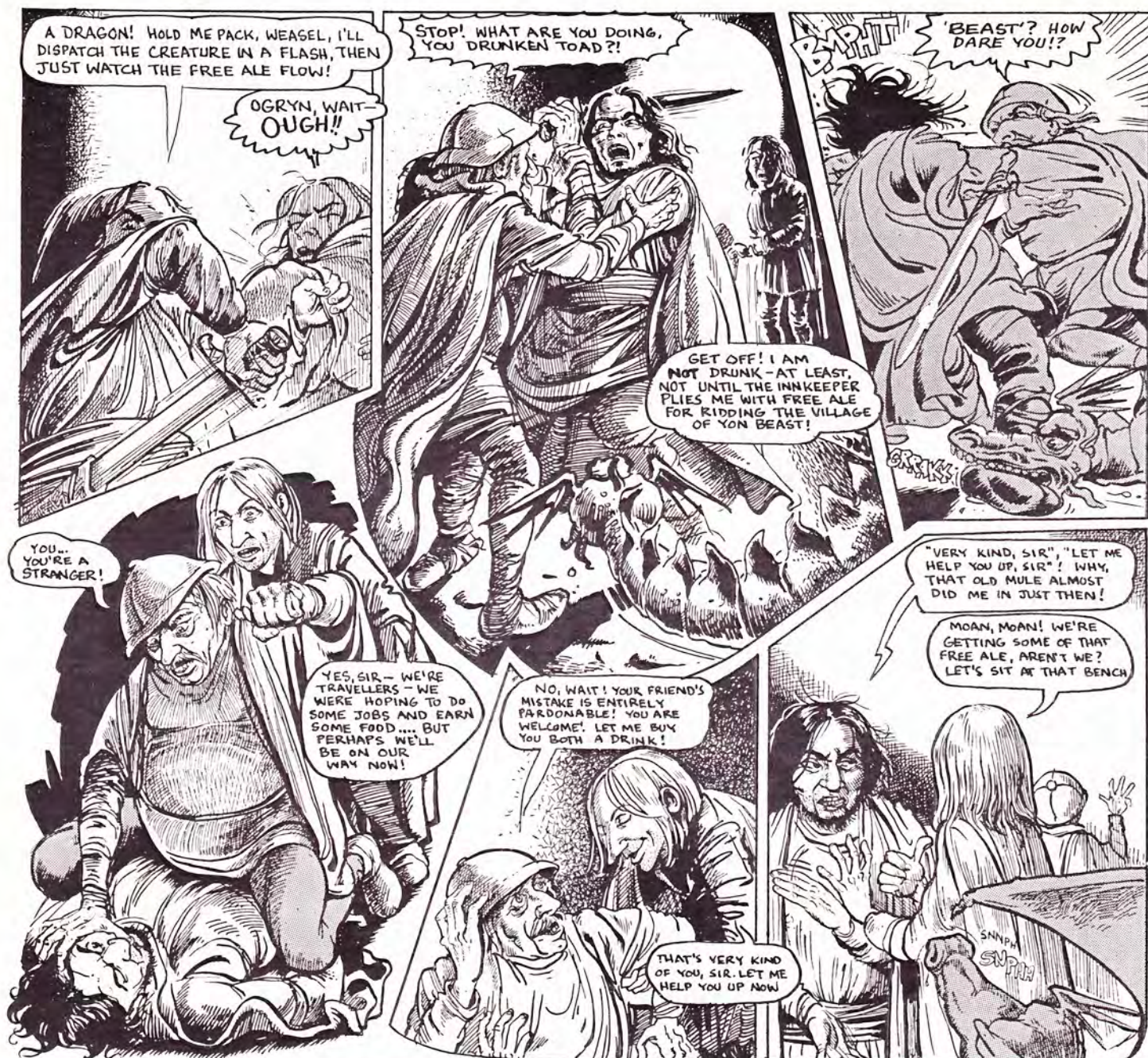
WHAT-LIKE REALLY BIG?



HAR HAR! I'M SURE NO DRAGON COULD SWALLOW YOU! COME ON - WE'VE ENOUGH FOR TWO SMALL ALES - AND WE CAN ASK IF THEY WANT A COUPLE OF ENTERTAINERS!

W-WEASEL -LOOK!





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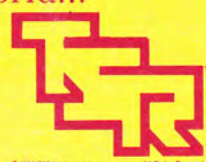
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